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OPINION METER

This week's poll:

Are you satisfied with Gov. Benigno Fitial's explanation relating to the temporary release of a federal detainee?

Let your voice be heard! Go to www.saipantribune.com to cast your vote.

INSIDE

New Guard

Republican Scott Brown wins the U.S. Senate seat in liberal Massachusetts.

NATION...Page 15

Success Stories

A week after the Haiti quake, rescue teams were emerging with improbable success stories.

WORLD...Page 16

No-Show

It is what Edgar Allan Poe might have called "a mystery all insoluble."

LIFE & STYLE...Page 18

US Labor asked to clarify prevailing wage issues in NMI

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
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REPORTER

Delegate Gregorio Kilili C. Sablan (D-MP) has asked U.S. Labor Secretary Hilda Solis for a clear guidance on the role of her department during the federalization of CNMI immigration transition period, including the determination of the "prevailing wage" to be paid foreign workers.

Solis has yet to respond to Sablan's letter dated Jan. 13.

Sablan specifically asked Solis to clarify the obligation of employers in deter-

See US LABOR on Page 4

Kilili declares re-election bid

Delegate Gregorio Kilili C. Sablan (D-MP), seated center, huddles with well-wishers during his 55th birthday celebration on Tuesday night at the Pacific Island Club's Seaside Grill in San Antonio, where he also officially announced his re-election bid.
HAIDEE V. EUGENIO

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
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REPORTER

Delegate Gregorio Kilili C. Sablan (D-MP) formally announced his re-election bid Tuesday night in front of a large crowd that included politicians of different political stripes, independents, supporters, friends and family.

Sablan is the CNMI's first non-voting delegate to the U.S. House of Representatives.

See KILILI on Page 4

US govt also summons the first lady to testify

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

Fitial

Aside from Gov. Benigno R. Fitial, the U.S. government has also summoned first lady Josie Fitial to testify about the alleged unauthorized release of a federal inmate from the Department of Corrections.

In a phone interview yesterday, assistant U.S. At-

See US GOVT on Page 4

NMC enrollment up 17 pct.

By MONETH G. DEPOSA
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REPORTER

The Northern Marianas College posted a 17-percent increase in its enrollment this Spring semester, recording a total of 987 students as the registration period ended Tuesday afternoon.

In Spring 2008, the college had 847 enrollees.

RELATED NEWS

- Less than 2K enrolled at NMC Rota, Tinian in 8 years. **PAGE 5**

See NMC on Page 4

LITTLE KINGS AND QUEENS HAIDEE V. EUGENIO

Glimpses of Saipan executive vice president Stella T. Fong and IT&E's Brad Ruszala pose with Little King and Queen of Hearts 2010 winners Arbee Lawrence B. Musngi and Mandy Joan Tenorio, both standing center, as well as some of the participants in the competition, at the Glimpses of Saipan office in Gualo Rai yesterday afternoon. ***See story on Page 4.***

CUC: 7K customers got better water service in 2009. **PAGE 2**

Sex abuse case dropped after victims moved to NC. **PAGE 3**

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Local

CUC: 7K customers got better water service in 2009

By MONETH G. DEPOSA
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REPORTER

About 7,000 customers of the Commonwealth Utilities Corp. now receive continuous and better water service delivery as a result of significant work done in 2009, according to CUC assistant executive director Abe Utu Malae.

He said the agency has about 10,000 water clients and only about 3,000 customers do not get 24/7 water supply to date.

Besides this, Malae said that CUC also improved the disinfection of its water system through the proper operation of chlorine stations and dedicating crews to this function. He said the steady source of chlorine from Guam also helps in achieving the mission to eliminate bacteriological violations on island.

Malae said this progress was among the conditions in the U.S. stipulated orders that CUC managed to address before the end of 2009.

He noted, though, that as long as over 50 percent of water produced disappears through leaky pipes, their progress in pressuring the lines will be slow. The water line replacement projects are therefore the most important ones for the Water Division.

With the continuing assistance and guidance of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, though, Malae believes the remaining concerns will be addressed.

"We have the Water Task Force working on these. EPA has announced the availability of $6 million for water and $5 million for sewer this year. This is really good news and we are very thankful," Malae told *Saipan Tribune.*

Pin insulators replaced

Malae said a total of 350 pole top pin insulators and numerous cross arms and other hardware were replaced in 2009, improving the maintenance of power facilities and eventually helping reduce the frequency of outages.

Among the areas that previously had the worst power outages were the Kagman and Dandan homesteads.

Because of the stabilized and improved power generation capacity, CUC said it is now producing a total of 58 megawatts as of December 2009, a 123-percent increase over January 2009's 26 MW.

So far, the peak demand on Saipan in 2010 was 40 MW; 58 MW is therefore sufficient for now, Malae said.

He said this was also achieved primarily because of the funding assistance provided by the federal government.

"The Department of the Interior's Office of Insular Affairs and CUC funded the necessary skilled staff—local and from overseas—equipment, materials and parts rather than pay for contractors to overhaul the engines," he said, adding that CUC has had "bad luck" with prior contractors.

Malae said OIA has expressed confidence in CUC despite the poor prognosis of the power generation system made in 2008 "by so-called utility experts" who assessed Power Plant 1 during the power crisis.

Malae said the change in some important procedures during power interruptions also helped resolved the crisis in power operation.

"The procedure in the past was that if there was a trip, the power plant would wait until the Water Division checked the affected wells before power would be restored. This is no longer the case," he said, adding that the correct procedure is for the power to be restored immediately and not wait for Water Division to check its motors and pumps.

"It is the responsibility of the Water Division to improve and protect its motors and pumps so that they are robust and able to respond to the normal emergencies faced by a power system," Malae explained.

CUC has managed to reduce feeder outage duration by 80 percent from 60-90 minutes to under three minutes per trip, he said.

How is your baby growing?

If your child displays any of the following signs of possible developmental delay, talk to your doctor, nurse, or other health care provider about it:

Developmental Health Watch
13 to 18 Months

- Cannot walk by 18 months
- By 15 months, does not seem to know the function of common household objects (brush, telephone, bell, fork, spoon)
- Cannot take off clothing
- Cannot build a tower of 3 blocks
- Cannot scribble
- Cannot kick a ball forward
- Cannot walk upstairs
- Cannot say at least 6 words
- Experiences a dramatic loss of skills he or she once had

Learn the Signs. Act Early.

You may also contact the Children's Developmental Assistance Center (C*DAC) at 664-4830 for a FREE developmental screening!

Information adapted from the Center of Disease Control and Prevention, Learn the Signs. Act Early.
Supported in part by project H25MC06112 from the MCHB (Title V, Social Security Act), HRSA, DHHS.

Big Steps for Little Feet

From left, Joseph C. Sablan, father; Gov. Benigno R. Fitial, 2LT Joseph T. Sablan, and House Speaker Froilan C. Tenorio.
CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

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THE LESSOR MUST COMPLY WITH PUBLIC LAW 15-23, ARTICLE 5, SECTION 8652 (A) - (D).
/s/ FRANK M. RABAULIMAN
DIRECTOR OF DEQ
/s/ HERMAN S. SABLAN
DIRECTOR, P&S

Fitial congratulates NMI's newest army officer, 2Lt Sablan

Gov. Benigno R. Fitial congratulates Joseph Tudela Sablan for being commissioned Second Lieutenant in the U.S. Army. At Tuesday's commissioning ceremony, Sablan marked another first for the NMI by becoming the first active duty soldier of the U.S. Army to be commissioned in the Commonwealth.

"Lt. Gov. Eloy Inos and I congratulate 2LT Sablan for a job very well done," said Fitial. "And I also congratulate his parents, spouse and children for the accomplishments of their proud son, husband and father."

Fitial and Inos joined Sablan's family and friends at Tuesday's commissioning ceremony. Also in attendance were House Speaker Froilan C. Tenorio, Sen. Pete P. Reyes and Saipan Mayor Donald P. Flores.

Sablan is a product of the Northern Marianas College-University of Guam Army Reserve Officers' Training Corps. LTC John W. Howerton said that Sablan will now await orders for his assignment to an active duty army unit.

"I wish 2LT Sablan well as he embarks on his new duties and responsibilities. We shall continue to pray for all our sons and daughters currently serving in the armed forces," said Fitial. ***(PR)***

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Sex abuse case dropped after victims moved to NC

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

The Superior Court has dismissed a criminal case against a 50-year-old man who was accused of sexually abusing two female minors in 2007.

Associate Judge David Wiseman dismissed without prejudice the case against Estanislao Camacho Villagomez after the Office of the Attorney General moved to drop the charges. Dismissal without prejudice allows a later filing of the same charges.

Wiseman granted the government's motion to dismiss the charges against Villagomez after being told that the witnesses and the alleged victims have moved to North Carolina.

Assistant attorney general George Hasselback said the alleged victims and witnesses have told the prosecution they wish to have nothing further to do with the case.

The jury trial was set for Jan. 25, 2010. Villagomez was charged with sexual abuse of a minor in the first and second degree and two counts of obstructing justice. He was arrested in August 2009.

In a written order issued yesterday, Wiseman said he granted the motion to drop the case with reluctance because of the egregious conduct alleged in the complaint.

The government had accused Villagomez of sexually abusing minor children, one of whom was 9 years old and was abused over a period of time.

Wiseman said CNMI has a very transit population, which the government is aware of.

"Perhaps, in the near future the government should revisit the options it has under the CNMI Code and the Rules of Criminal Procedure that were designed to preserve testimony or evidence for witnesses and victims in criminal cases who are likely to be transiting," the judge said.

A detective stated in his report that the two girls alleged that Villagomez sexually abused them in 2007 in separate incidents. Villagomez allegedly offered money to one victim to keep the incidents a secret.

Sentencing of suspect in trader's murder postponed

The Superior Court has postponed the sentencing of the man convicted of killing a Korean businessman in Tanapag.

Ezra Kaainoa Deleon Guerrero was supposed to be sentenced yesterday at 1:30pm, but associate judge Perry B. Inos rescheduled it to March 3, 2010, at 9am.

Saipan Tribune learned yesterday that Inos also ordered an extension on the filing of the pre-sentence investigation report on Deleon Guerrero. The Office of Adult Probation was supposed to submit the report on Dec. 20, 2009, but this was extended to Feb. 12, 2010.

The judge issued the order after Probation officer Simram Simram asked the court on Dec. 18 to give him more time to file the presentence investigation report.

The 25-year-old Deleon Guerrero pleaded guilty to murder in the first degree on Oct. 21, 2009.

Jae Soung Shim, 65, was killed inside New Star Market, on May 17, 2009.

Police said Shim was reading behind the cashier's counter when Deleon Guerrero entered the store and repeatedly hit him on the head with a *tangan-tangan* stick.

Autopsy showed that the businessman sustained multiple skull fractures, the result of repeated blows to the head.

After a few days, police arrested Deleon Guerrero. ***(Ferdie de la Torre)***

CNMI responds to Haiti quake relief

Island residents and businesses are now beginning to do their part in helping the victims of the Jan. 12 Haiti earthquake that has so far claimed 72,000 lives, and displaced millions.

"We all need to extend our helping hand to our brothers and sisters in Haiti. We live in one world," said Rabby Syed, president of the United Workers Movement-NMI, which will hold a donation drive on Friday, Jan. 22, from 4pm to 6pm at the Microl intersection in San Jose.

Syed will be joined by other members of the workers' movement and their families.

"Your dollar will go a long way in helping victims in Haiti," he said.

The United Workers Movement-NMI will hand over all the collected cash donations to the American Red Cross-NMI Chapter, which will then use it to help in the Haiti relief effort, said Syed.

The group's donation drive will be held on Jan. 22 and 29, both Fridays, at the same venue.

One of the first CNMI businesses to assist in the Haiti quake efforts is Docomo Pacific, which has announced that its customers will be able to donate funds by texting to 42484 (HAITI) on their Docomo Pacific phones from Jan. 19 to Feb. 15.

By texting to 42484 on their cell phones, donors will be giving $5 per text to the relief fund. This charge will be deducted from the subscribers' load value for prepaid customers. For postpaid customers, the charge will appear on their bills. Customers may text as many times as they like, Docomo Pacific said.

Just like the United Workers Movement-NMI, Docomo Pacific will donate collected funds to the CNMI chapter of the American Red Cross, which has already initiated donations and a local fund drive for the people of Haiti. ***(Haidee V. Eugenio)***

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Tenorio, Musngi win Little King & Queen of hearts

By MONETH G. DEPOSA
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REPORTER

Five-year-old Mandy Joan Tenorio and Arbee Lawrence Musngi were named *Beach Road Magazine*'s Little King & Queen of Hearts for 2009 after getting the most number of text votes in the competition.

Tenorio, the third child of Novelyn and Manny Tenorio, is a student at Garapan Head Start Center. This is her second time to participate in the competition; she bagged third place in 2007.

Her proud mother said it's been her daughter's wish to join an activity where she could show the best of herself. At her last birthday, the Tenorio family treated their little queen to a mini-fashion show.

Along with the gift items and certificates, Mandy Joan also received cash prize and a brand new cellular phone.

Saipan Tribune learned that Mandy Joan received 6,443 in total text votes, besting 15 other contenders in the event.

This year's Little King of Hearts is Arbee Lawrence B. Musngi, the son of Bhea and Arlen Musngi. He garnered a total of 791 text votes of support.

Saipan Tribune learned that Musngi likes playing with building blocks, which help develop his fine motor skills. Arbee also loves playing with his Thomas the Tank Engine and listen to music of the same cartoon character.

'Other winners'

During yesterday's awarding ceremonies, two other kids were named recipients of special awards.

Nia Ada Wright was adjudged winner of two special awards: best in smile and best in pose. Alyson Red Camacho, meantime, emerged as the best in eco-friendly attire.

According to Virgie Avendaño, operations manager of Glimpses of Saipan Inc., there were a total of 22,538 text votes received this year for all 16 contestants.

In the maiden launch of the photo-contest in 2007, Avendaño said an overwhelming 250,000 text votes were recorded for all 36 contenders. There wee over 7,000 text votes in the second year, with 15 kids joining the contest.

The awarding rites was attended by Stella Fong, executive vice president of Glimpses of Saipan Inc., *Beach Road Magazine*'s Alexie Villegas Zotomayor, and representatives of event sponsors IT&E, Suave, Tan Holdings, Wells Fargo, Subway, Lollipops, and Budget Rent a Car.

NMC

From Page 1

Data released by the college showed that the associate degree in liberal arts program and bachelor's degree in elementary education program had the highest number of registrants of 291 and 211 students, respectively.

For the associate degree in business, NMC listed 74 enrollees, while business administration posted a total of 97 enrollees: accounting emphasis, 34; business management emphasis, 31; and computer application, 32.

The associate degree in criminal justice program recorded 77 enrollees; hospital management, 17; and natural resource management, 17.

The associate degree in nursing program also registered an overwhelming 130 students this semester, while 85 registrants enrolled in the college's non-degree programs and others.

Classes for spring semester begin this week.

According to Leo Pangelinan, dean of Student Services and Programs, the 17-percent enrollment increase is evidence that students continue to have confidence in the college's academic system.

NMC's accreditation with the Western Association of Schools and Colleges was reaffirmed in June 2009, after being placed on probation in 2006 and the more severe sanction of show-cause in 2007. These sanctions came about after the college failed to resolve team recommendations in 2007.

This re-accreditation, coupled with the aggressive recruitment efforts initiated by the college management, propelled this year's enrollment jump, according to NMC interim president Lorraine Cabrera.

She also cited the activities hosted by the College Access Challenge Project, a program that aims to increase the number of Native Pacific Islanders from low-income families in college, and NMC's ongoing efforts to improve the quality of instruction and community program offerings.

"I am very pleased with the spring enrollment numbers. Despite the trying times, individuals continue to work toward attaining higher education and obtaining a college diploma," said Cabrera, adding that NMC is well equipped and has talented and hardworking staff and faculty to continue providing quality instruction and a comfortable learning environment.

Another factor that may have contributed to the enrollment increase is the continued closure of NMC's Rota and Tinian instructional sites. Many students on both islands have transferred to the main campus on Saipan to continue with their degree programs.

NMC suspended the academic and certificate programs on both islands in Spring 2008.

US GOVT

From Page 1

torney Eric O'Malley disclosed that he summoned everyone that was mentioned in his moving papers filed in the U.S. District Court for the NMI "as someone who might have witnessed the event."

O'Malley said the first lady is among the six people they summoned to testify at the Feb. 17, 2010, evidentiary hearing.

KSPN2 and *Saipan Tribune* earlier already reported that the U.S. government had summoned Gov. Fitial.

According to a Fitial administration statement, DOC Commissioner Dolores Aldan had stated that the DOC staff and first lady Josie Fitial were present during the period that Qing Mei Cheng administered massage therapy on the governor at his private residence in Gualo Rai in the early morning of Jan. 8, 2010.

O'Malley said they sent subpoenas to four others—Commissioner Aldan, DOC Capt. Arnold K. Seman, Capt. Georgia Cabrera, and Corrections Officer Abigail Borja.

The U.S. government identified the four as those who escorted Qing to Fitial's residence, allegedly without prior federal authorization and having received the governor's approval.

O'Malley explained that the evidentiary hearing's primary purpose is to find out whether or not there was anything that might have prejudiced the case against Qing.

"We will be calling witnesses. The normal rules of evidence don't necessarily apply. So basically it's just going to be an inquiry and I expect that the judge will have some questions as well," O'Malley said.

As to whether the judge will issue a determination after the hearing, O'Malley said the judge has the authority to take whatever actions he sees fit.

O'Malley also stated that his understanding is that the CNMI government intends to probably file a motion to quash the subpoenas.

When asked if the governor or DOC officials may have committed a crime in Qing's unauthorized release, O'Malley replied: "It's way too early to say that. Even if there were, I won't tell you."

The original schedule for the evidentiary hearing was last Friday, Jan. 15, but Attorney General Edward T. Buckingham asked to move the hearing to Feb. 17, 2010, to give him more time to prepare.

U.S. District Court for the NMI Chief Judge Alex Munson granted Buckingham's request.

Qing was among 24 Chinese nationals recently arrested by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement agents for allegedly trying to unlawfully enter Guam on a boat.

The 28-year-old Qing and Jian Li, 31, male, were indicted on 22 counts of attempting to bring aliens to the U.S. illegally.

KILILI

From Page 1

The $200-per-plate fundraiser at the Pacific Islands Club's Seaside Grill in San Antonio also marked Sablan's 55th birthday. He was born on Jan. 19, 1955.

"I'm very humbled and very pleased with the crowd," he told *Saipan Tribune* Tuesday night.

The big crowd at Sablan's fundraiser included friends and family, supporters, independents, stalwarts of the Republican Party, Covenant Party members, and Democrats.

He said he will continue to focus on education, health, and other policy issues affecting the CNMI. Sablan said his office will continue to improve the CNMI's working relationship with the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, the lead agency in the federalization of CNMI immigration.

"We want to make sure we continue to improve our relationship with the Department of Homeland Security so that we continue [to have access to] Russian and Chinese tourists," he said, adding that these two tourism markets are important to the local economy.

Sablan, who ran as an independent, beat eight other candidates in the CNMI's first election for a nonvoting delegate to the U.S. Congress on Nov. 4, 2008. He was sworn into office on Jan. 6, 2009, in Washington, D.C. for a two-year term.

Sablan is the first to formally declare his candidacy for the CNMI delegate post, to be elected in the Nov. 2, 2010, federal elections.

In his first year in office, Sablan has been credited with pushing CNMI issues to the forefront, including pumping more federal funding for education, health and other programs. His presence in the U.S. Congress has gained the CNMI a seat on the table, enabling him to introduce bills critical to the Commonwealth, including the submerged lands bill.

Through Sablan's efforts, the CNMI also received its first congressionally requested earmarks amounting to $1.35 million when President Obama signed into law an omnibus Fiscal Year 2010 appropriations bill early this month. H.R. 3288 provides $447 billion in FY 2010 appropriations.

He is a member of the U.S. House Committee on Education and Labor's Subcommittees on Early Childhood, Elementary and Secondary Education, and Workforce Protections. Sablan is also a member of the Committee on Natural Resources' Subcommittee on Insular Affairs, Oceans and Wildlife, as well as on Energy and Mineral Resources.

Besides committee memberships, Sablan is also a member of 15 caucuses, including the powerful Congressional Hispanic Caucus and the Democratic Caucus.

Sablan exceeded their target of 100 individuals to show up at the $200-per-plate fundraiser from 6pm to 9pm. At least two more fundraisers are planned before the Nov. 2 elections.

David Attao, acting chairman of the Republican Party, said yesterday that the GOP does not have an official candidate yet.

The Covenant Party also has yet to name a delegate candidate.

US LABOR

From Page 1

mining the prevailing wage, as well as the process by which prevailing wage will be determined and the minimum from which that prevailing wage will be determined.

In the Dec. 4 Federal Register, the U.S. Department of Labor's Employment and Training Administration said it is now providing guidance for prevailing wage determinations for use in the CNMI effective Nov. 28, the date when the U.S. federal government took over CNMI immigration.

The prevailing wage is different from, and is generally higher than, the minimum wage.

In the CNMI, the current minimum wage is $4.55 an hour, and will increase by 50 cents every year until it reaches the federal wage floor of $7.25 an hour under a federal law.

Members of the Saipan Chamber of Commerce, the largest business organization in the CNMI with some 150 members, have brought up a lot of questions on the prevailing wage since the US Labor's public notice.

Jim Arenovski, vice president of the Chamber, had said that the next challenge at the federal level is to effectively work with the US Labor in making sure appropriate job classifications and prevailing wages are set for the CNMI.

Among other things, it's not clear from the US Labor notice whether employers are obligated to conduct a survey, and for many small businesses, a survey of that depth would create a substantial burden.

Sablan asked Solis for an "official confirmation" that businesses need not conduct a survey.

"There is also some confusion about the process that will be used to determine the prevailing wage. Guidance issued by the Department of Labor and staffers from the Office of Congressional and Intergovernmental Affairs have told us that the Office of Foreign Labor Certification will set this wage by looking at minimum wage, federal contracting wages, and mandated wages under the Davis-Bacon Act, but we have also been told by representatives from your agency that Davis-Bacon does not apply in the Northern Mariana Islands and thus OFLC is under no obligation to set a prevailing wage," he said.

Prevailing wage is the hourly wage, usual benefits and overtime paid in the largest city in each county, to the majority of workers, laborers, and mechanics.

US Labor said the minimum monetary wages and fringe benefits to be paid are established based on what is prevailing in the locality.

A rate is determined to prevail where a single rate is paid to a majority (50 percent or more) of the workers in the same class in a particular locality.

For example, in Guam, which is only about 120 miles away from the CNMI capital of Saipan, the prevailing wage rate for an accountant is $12.46 an hour or $25,917 a year to $22.70 an hour or $47,216 a year, based on data from US Labor's website.

The CNMI's first non-voting delegate to the U.S. Congress also raised concern that the federal minimum wage, rather than the local minimum wage, would be used as the base on which prevailing wage determinations are built.

Local businesses said they cannot afford to pay the higher federal minimum wage, and they also want a confirmation in writing that the prevailing wage determination will be based on the local minimum wage.

"Madam Secretary, I realize that implementing a system for determining prevailing wage in the CNMI is a complicated and unique process. However, the lack of explanation received from the Department of Labor, and your agency's absence from the Northern Mariana Islands during this transition despite your pivotal role, have created the feeling that this transition will only hurt our businesses, our workers, and our families," Sablan told Solis.

The U.S. Department of Labor has not sent any representative to the CNMI since the federal takeover of local immigration on Nov. 28, 2009. So far, only the U.S. Department of Homeland Security and its component agencies have made their presence felt in the CNMI.

Less than 2K enrolled at NMC Rota, Tinian in 8 years

By MONETH G. DEPOSA
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REPORTER

A total of less than 2,000 students were enrolled at the Rota and Tinian sites of the Northern Marianas College in the last eight academic years and, unless the enrollment numbers go up, both instructional sites will remain closed in the foreseeable future.

Data from the college indicated that only 1,985 students enrolled in both campuses from 2000 through 2008. Of this number, a total of 1,046 were accommodated on Tinian while 939 were registered on Rota. NMC records are for Fall, Spring, and Summer semesters of each academic year.

In 2000-2001, a total of 292 students were enrolled on both sites in three semesters; 309 in 2002; 295 in 2003; 308 in 2004; 316 in 2005; 237 in 2006; 152 in 2007; and only 76 in 2008. As the records show, the decline in enrollment began in 2003.

For this reason, both instructional sites are expected to remain closed to academic programs until enrollment figures improve and sufficient funding is identified to sustain the equal delivery of quality programs.

According to NMC interim president Lorraine T. Cabrera, both sites continue to play an integral role in the college's mission to advance the academic and professional training of students.

She said the college is currently evaluating the different ways it can expand educational and professional training services on Rota and Tinian in the absence of academic classes on both campuses.

"While we do this, we have also taken extra steps to assist Rota and Tinian students transition successfully to the Saipan campus as they pursue their degrees," said Cabrera.

With the new semester, she said NMC staff has stepped up efforts to assist students find housing and other types of aid so that students can focus on their academic studies on Saipan.

Cabrera said NMC has also began various evaluation and feasibility studies, including focus groups sessions, to better determine the needs of the Rota and Tinian community as well as NMC's ability to meet such needs.

Last month, a focus group session was held with a diverse cross-section of the Tinian community to identify the priority educational and training needs of the community.

Earlier this year, the NMC Board of Regents, in setting the goals and objectives for the NMC president, included an assessment on the need to expand the services that are now being offered at the Rota and Tinian instructional sites.

Full of activities

In the meantime, both the Rota and Tinian instructional sites are full of activities, NMC said, with services being offered through programs such as Adult Basic Education, the Upward Bound Program, the Educational Talent Search Program, and the Cooperative Research Extension and Education Services program.

Both instructional sites have also been instrumental in assisting other agencies and companies organize events like workshops, seminars, and other training activities. For instance, the Tinian Instructional Site hosted the Florida-based Adams Marine Co., which provided opportunities for residents to receive training toward qualifying to receive their captain's license.

On Rota, CREES regularly assists farmers and ranchers, especially in providing modern, alternative methods of farming and aquaculture. There have also been other training/preparatory classes, like the preparation class for the NCLEX examinations that are being conducted through video teleconferencing.

Other workshops and training sessions are also regularly held at the Rota and Tinian instructional sites, sponsored by other government agencies. These include water quality training (EMO), disaster recovery workshops (Homeland Security), pesticide safety (CREES), and other activities that benefit the community.

Rota mayor offers an 'open and accountable' leadership

By Haidee V. Eugenio
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REPORTER

Newly sworn in Rota Mayor Melchor A. Mendiola has offered to have an "open and accountable" administration, and urged lawmakers to hold public hearings on Rota on all proposed legislation affecting the residents of the island.

"I expect all departments and agencies of government to open their doors and be all out in providing the best services the people deserves," said Mendiola in his Jan. 13 inaugural address in front of a large crowd.

In his two-page inaugural speech, a copy of which was obtained by *Saipan Tribune* yesterday, Mendiola said holding public hearings on Rota ensures that residents participate in the "process of democratic system."

Mendiola's inauguration came a few days after the Commonwealth Election Commission recounted on Jan. 7 over 1,400 ballots in the Rota election after the initial results were contested by his opponent, former Rep. Victor B. Hocog.

The recount showed Mendiola winning by 49 votes over Hocog.

Mendiola, in his speech, said through open dialogue, officials can achieve benefits for the people. The mayor said he will work on improving the island economy through sound practices "that will promote and encourage foreign and local investments," and will establish good working relationship with government and military officials, as the island looks to exporting fresh agricultural products to Guam.

Mendiola also called for a balance between economic development and environmental protection and cultural preservation.

He said young local people should be trained not only because of federalization, "but because it is the right thing to do."

"A healthy community is where needs are met by their own resources, both in skilled and educated work force, and having the natural resources to sustain that community," he added.

Ultimate goal

Mendiola said his ultimate goal as mayor "is to meet the level of revenue generated by your private sector through the various industries, including casino, tourism, agriculture, fisheries and manufacturing that will satisfy the needs of this community."

There are at least four groups of investors interested in putting up casino resorts on Rota: Rota Treasure Island Corp., Rota Resort & Country Club, American Pacific, and Renfeng Investment.

"Only then can sufficient financial support be realized by our health department, education of our youth, support for our senior citizens, social and community programs," he said, but added that these can be accomplished only with the support and cooperation of the community, especially the private sector.

He said an expansion of the private sector means an expansion or increase in the tax base that will lead to improved economic condition. This is why foreign and local investments are crucial to the health of Rota's economy, he said.

Mendiola also called for "understanding and patience," saying that progress will not materialize overnight.

In his address, Mendiola thanked the people of Rota, his supporters and guests not only from the island, but also from Saipan, Tinian and Guam.

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Life in Motion

15 DPH staff get certified on medical billing, coding

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

With training, CHC's cash flow seen to improve

FERDIE DE LA TORRE

Guam Marianas Training Center president Fe Valencia-Ovalles, extreme right, poses with 13 of the 15 successful trainees yesterday at PIC's Magellan Room. Also in the photo are Public Health Secretary Joseph Kevin Villagomez, Work Investment Agency executive director Edith Deleon Guerrero, other Public Health officials, and trainer Russell Ragay.

The Guam Marianas Training Center handed out certificates yesterday to 15 Saipan and Rota public health staff who finished and passed a medical billing and coding specialist course.

In a simple ceremony at the Pacific Islands Club's Magellan Room, GMTC president Fe Valencia-Ovalles was aided by Public Health Secretary Joseph Kevin Villagomez and Workforce Investment Agency executive director Edith Deleon in handing out the certificates to the successful trainees. Also present were other public health officials.

Villagomez congratulated all the trainees who sacrificed their time and exerted efforts to undergo the 10-day training held at the Commonwealth Health Center.

"By honing your skills like this, it will allow us to do our job better for the community," Villagomez said.

WIA funded the training.

WIA director Deleon Guerrero said her office invests in this kind of training because they are also looking at regional and global workforce needs.

The 22 participants came from the Commonwealth Health Center, Medicaid Office, Community Guidance Center, and Rota Health Center. The training ended Dec. 23, 2009.

In an interview with Saipan Tribune, Deleon Guerrero said the focus of CNMI WIA is to provide the local workforce with credentials.

"We know that the incumbent workers of the hospital are in great need of training," she added.

Deleon Guerrero said credentialing the personnel that handle medical billing and coding is important because it allows hospital specialists to focus on what they are doing.

"It's beneficial to the organization and it gives them the right credentials on what they are doing right now in their job career," she said.

Deleon Guerrero said the participants are currently working on the billing section of the hospital.

"When you credentialize your employees, it gives them the right standards, the professionalism, the right credentials, and it makes them more productive in their work," she said.

With the training, she said, the certified medical billing and coding specialists will do the correct codings in their collections.

"So you can already anticipate perhaps a much increased revenue collection for the hospital because you've got the encoders that know the industry standards in coding," she said.

She said the certificates are good for two years and that these personnel have to maintain their credentials.

Ovalles said GMTC is an authorized National Health Career Association testing facility for national certification in various health and allied careers.

GMTC was established in 1999. It opened the first privately-owned Health and Allied school in Guam in 2003.

Ovalles said training was intended to establish credentials for all the medical billing and coding personnel at CHC.

"It clearly defines the commitment of the Fitial-Inos administration to ensure that our government employees are trained and certified for the field that they are in," she said.

With DPH employees getting certified in medical billing and coding, Ovalles said this should definitely improve the cash flow of the hospital in terms of collections and in terms of proper coding of the different medical cases that they entertain.

"We are happy. It's a very good working relationship with two government agencies [WIA and DPH]," she said.

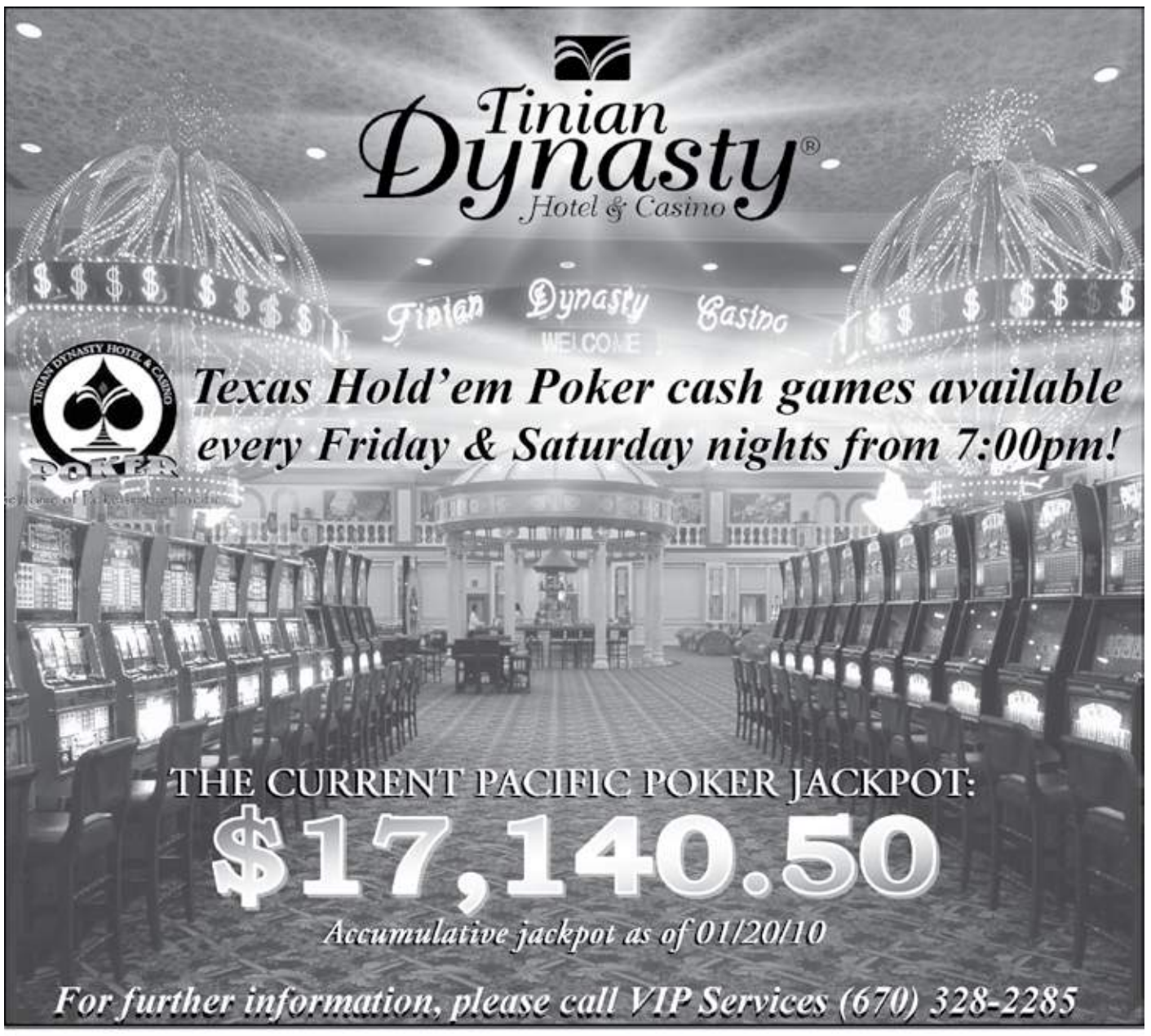
Russel Ragay, a U.S. certified trainer from the Philippines, conducted the training that was completed in 60 to 80 hours.

Ovalles said with the certification, the specialists are now more aware and conscious of what coding and billing is all about.

"Especially the ones that are certified, they will be more inspired. And of course they will know now the importance of their roles at CHC," she added.

The 13 successful trainees yesterday were Roxanne Aranda, Corazon Ada, Aulerio Ngiraibuuch, Evelyn Itibus, Lourdes Kaipat-Lampkin, Roselynn Gibbons, Angela Maui, Yvonne Sablan, Rosalia Pangelinan, Suzie Ngiraswei, Imelda Marie Atalig, Henry Reyes Jr., and Esther Muna.

Seven participants did not pass but they can go through a review session if they want to take the examination again.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NMHC says four projects approved for ARRA funding

By MONETH G. DEPOSA
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REPORTER

Four projects proposed by the Northern Marianas Housing Corp. were approved for federal funding under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009.

In a report submitted by the housing corporation to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development on Dec. 31, the agency said these funding allocations are appropriated under the Community Development Block Grant funds.

The report stated that the CNMI received approval for four projects: the Tinian public facility infiltration system, Chalan Kanoa Kios Ku public facility, rehabilitation of the Sinapalo Elementary School, and the Grotto bathrooms public facility.

These projects are incorporated in the CNMI's 5-Year Consolidated Plan for 2005-2009, NMHC said.

Besides these projects, the CNMI was also approved $589,165 under the Homeless Prevention and Rapid Re-housing program.

This program provides homelessness prevention assistance to households that would otherwise become homeless—many due to the economic crisis—and to provide assistance to rapidly re-house persons who are homeless. Under these funds, financial assistance is limited to short-term rental assistance, utility payments or deposits, or moving cost assistance.

More projects

NMHC stated in its report that two other projects were selected for funding in program year 2008 and these include the rehabilitation of Gregorio T. Camacho Elementary School in San Roque and the Northern Mariana Islands Football Association football field in Koblerville.

It noted that NMHC is in the process of requesting HUD to reprogram $800,000 from the rehabilitation of GTC's buildings to the football project because the CNMI CIP office has already allocated funding from the Department of the Interior for the school rehabilitation.

NMHC receives a total of $2 million from three different sources each year: the Community Development Block Grant, Home Investment Partnership Grant, and the Emergency Shelter Grant.

Saipan Tribune learned that a total of 37 projects have been completed using federal funds from program year 2000 to 2008.

FBI warns of Haitian earthquake relief fraud

The FBI reminds Internet users who receive appeals to donate money in the aftermath of the earthquake in Haiti to apply a critical eye and do their due diligence before responding to those requests. Past tragedies and natural disasters have prompted individuals with criminal intent to solicit contributions purportedly for a charitable organization or a good cause.

Before making a donation of any kind, consumers should adhere to certain guidelines, to include the following:

■ Do not respond to any unsolicited (spam) incoming e-mails, including clicking links contained within those messages.

■ Be skeptical of individuals representing themselves as surviving victims or officials asking for donations via e-mail or social networking sites.

■ Verify the legitimacy of nonprofit organizations by utilizing various Internet-based resources that may assist in confirming the group's existence and its nonprofit status rather than following a purported link to the site.

■ Be cautious of e-mails that claim to show pictures of the disaster areas in attached files because the files may contain viruses. Only open attachments from known senders.

■ Make contributions directly to known organizations rather than relying on others to make the donation on your behalf to ensure contributions are received and used for intended purposes.

■ Do not give your personal or financial information to anyone who solicits contributions: Providing such information may compromise your identity and make you vulnerable to identity theft.

Anyone who has received an e-mail referencing the above information or anyone who may have been a victim of this or a similar incident should notify the ic3 via www.ic3.gov. ***(FBI)***

EMO: Dangerous waves, rip currents today

The CNMI Emergency Management Office issued yesterday a high surf warning and is advising the public to avoid venturing near exposed reefs and beaches, especially along north and east facing reefs as rip currents are life threatening.

Based on information received from the National Weather Service in Tiyan, Guam, a high pressure building north of the region will bring strong to gale force winds and hazardous seas to the Marianas. Winds and seas are expected to subside slightly today but will remain above small craft advisory criteria.

"Dangerous battering waves will pound reefs and beaches, producing deadly rip currents as well as minor coastal erosion. Expect dangerous surf of 10 to 15 feet along north and east facing reefs and beaches," EMO said.

Inexperienced mariners, especially those operating smaller vessels, are advised to avoid navigating in these conditions. "If boating is necessary, please exercise caution when entering and leaving harbors, inlets and near reef lines," EMO said.

The high surf warning will remain in effect until 10am tomorrow, Jan. 22. A wind advisory was in effect until 6pm yesterday evening.

EMO said the gale force winds will gradually subside to near fresh levels for the weekend. Combined seas will subside from around 16 feet to around 10 feet by the weekend. Mainly dry weather will prevail the rest of the week. ***(Saipan Tribune)***

NEWS BRIEFS

Census to update map of Saipan villages

The Local Census Office is informing residents of Saipan that official Census staff will be traveling throughout the villages on Saipan updating maps in preparation for the Census activities that will begin in late March.

It may be necessary for Census staff to drive or walk down private roads in order to verify existing roads with the Census maps sent from Washington, D.C. The LCO asks for everyone's cooperation as this important portion of the preliminary Census work is being completed.

All Census staff have official identification and residents can ask to see this identification at any time in order to verify their identity. Census vehicles will either have a 2010 Census sign on their windshield or on the door. Call the Census Office at 288-3027/3031 with any questions. ***(PR)***

New Supreme Court rules now in effect

The new "Northern Mariana Islands Supreme Court Rules" governing appellate procedure before the Supreme Court became effective on Jan. 13, 2010; litigants have been directed to begin their use as of Jan. 20.

The new rules were submitted to the Legislature for approval on Nov. 13, 2009. Neither house of the Legislature disapproved or modified the submission. The new rules replace the "Rules of Appellate Procedure," which had been in effect since Dec. 29, 1992.

The new rules can be found on the Law Revision Commission's Web site (www.cnmilaw.org) under "Legal Documents."

Daniel Stafford, Clerk of the Supreme Court, announced that court staff will conduct a session for Continuing Legal Education credit on the rules' content at the March Bar Association meeting. ***(PR)***

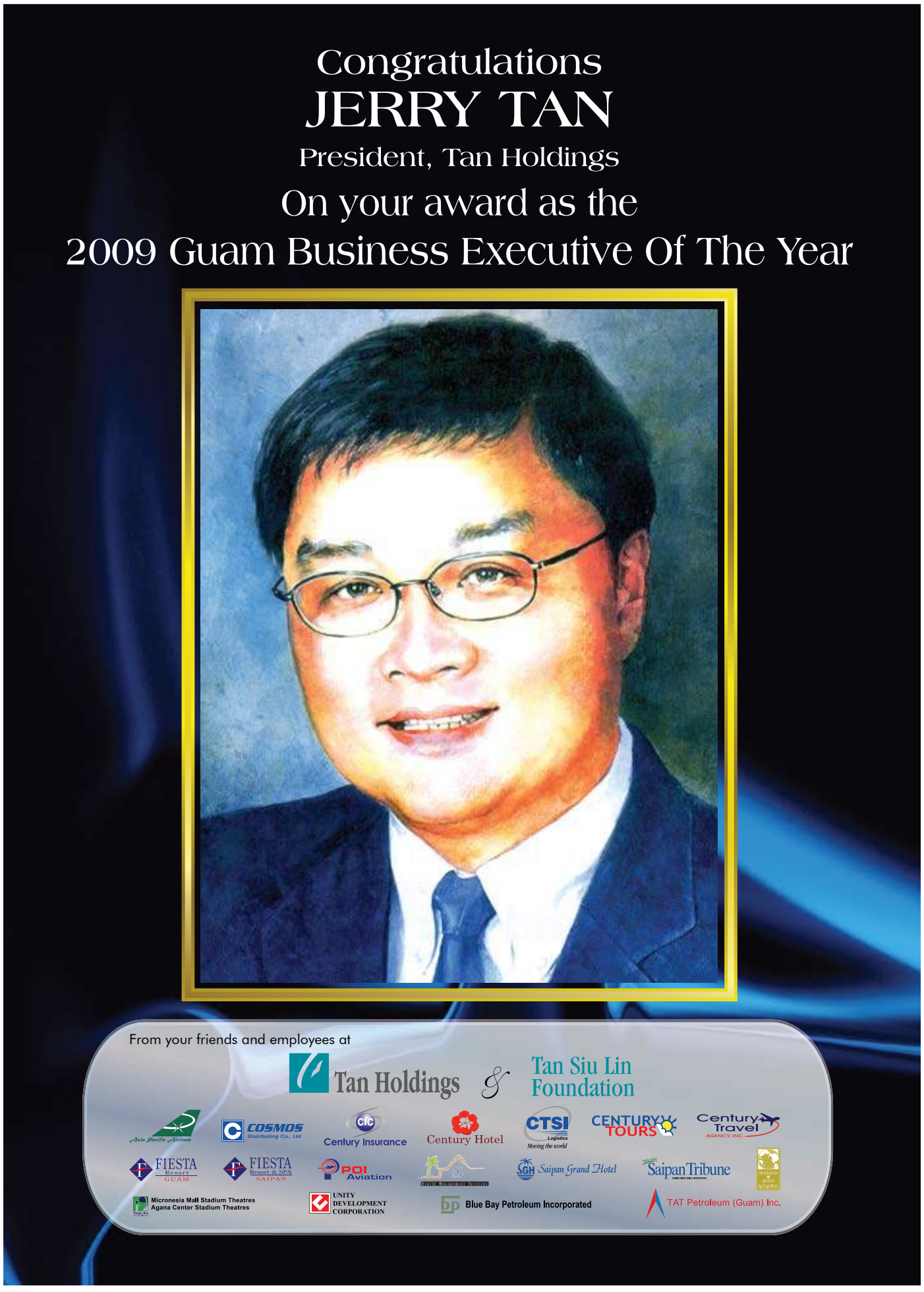
Free lecture on high-efficiency windmills

Physics professor John N. Hait will be conducting a free science lecture on making high-efficiency windmills this Friday, Jan. 22, 2010, at 6pm, at the American Memorial Park's Visitors' Center. This alternative energy lecture for fun and profit will focus on timely and practical applications for local use, with the aim of making the island a showcase of Earth-compatible energy generation.

For more information, go to www.EinsteinCode.info. Also, learn Science the easy way with online poetry. ***(PR)***

RUBBING ELBOWS CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Sonya P. Dancoe, second from right, a civil engineer with the Southwest Solar Technology, is shown with a company official and co-worker posing with Sen. John McCain at a private event in Phoenix, Arizona.



MVA thanks top tourism contributors

The Marianas Visitors Authority's board of directors presents a plaque of appreciation to Asiana Airlines on Jan. 14, at the agency's general membership meeting.

MVA

Top contributors to the tourism promotion efforts of the Marianas Visitors Authority were recognized Thursday, Jan. 14, at the agency's general membership meeting.

The MVA recognized Asiana Airlines, Fiesta Resort & Spa, Tasi Tours, Sand Castle Saipan, and Island Apparel for making the largest in-kind donations last fiscal year to the agency's efforts to promote tourism on Saipan, Tinian and Rota.

Most the donations were targeted toward familiarizing travel agents and media with the many offerings of this resort destination.

Asiana Airlines led airline donors and was also the largest overall contributor with its provision of airline tickets for two travel agent FAM tour groups from Osaka, Japan and Busan, Korea. Fiesta Resort & Spa offered a full range of hotel accommodations, meals, spa treatments and other amenities to numerous industry guests. Tasi Tours offered dozens of free trips to award-winning Managaha island, as well as free lunches, water sports, and other activities. SandCastle Saipan was the largest restaurant donor, treating over 100 travel agents, media reps, and other industry reps to its Las Vegas-style dinner show.

Meanwhile, Island Apparel put a smile on the face of visiting children and led Support Services providers with donations including 15 boxes of Saipan-da backpacks for the annual Happy Children in Paradise giveaway.

"While the MVA continues to work to maximize our limited promotional funding, we are still heavily on the donations of our tourism partners to showcase our island attractions," said MVA managing director Perry Tenorio. "This helps makes a tremendous difference for Northern Marianas tourism, and as a community, we should all be grateful for the support of these private companies."

In Fiscal Year 2009, the MVA had a $6.6-million budget. ***(MVA)***

MVA

The Marianas Visitors Authority's board of directors presents a plaque of appreciation to Fiesta Resort & Spa on Jan. 14, at the agency's general membership meeting.

MVA

The Marianas Visitors Authority's board of directors presents a plaque of appreciation to Island Apparel on Jan. 14, at the agency's general membership meeting.

MVA

The Marianas Visitors Authority's board of directors presents a plaque of appreciation to SandCastle Saipan on Jan. 14, at the agency's general membership meeting.

The Marianas Visitors Authority's board of directors presents a plaque of appreciation to Tasi Tours on Jan. 14, at the agency's general membership meeting.

MVA

Flashback

A LOOK BACK AT PAST YEARS' HEADLINES

Jan. 21, 1999

Legislators asks CPA to defer hikes

Legislators yesterday frowned on a proposed rate increase at the airport to repay some $53 million in debt owed by Commonwealth Ports Authority due to potential negative impact on the local tourism economy that has been battered already by plummeting tourist arrivals. Instead, they urged CPA to defer the hike for at least one year and give way to a plan by the Aviation Task Force to reduce the landing fees paid by airlines in a bid to entice the carriers to increase their flights to the Northern Marianas. In a meeting with members of the House of Representatives and the Senate, ports authority officials defended the move as an urgent measure to generate additional revenues to meet its various financial obligations, including debt servicing.

Bill levies garment products

A legislative proposal is under way in the House of Representatives seeking to impose a $1.25 fee on each finished garment product in the CNMI, whose proceeds will be set aside for homestead and public education funds. House Bill 11-362, proposed by Rep. Rosiky Camacho, aims to generate millions of dollars in additional revenues for the financially-troubled government for critical agencies, such as the Public School System and the Northern Marianas College. But the proposal is expected to draw opposition from garment leaders whose heavily-taxed industry has become the steady source of income for the commonwealth when its major tourism economy continues to suffer in the wake of the Asian financial turmoil.

Jan. 21, 2000

Increase in business activity noted

After reaching rock bottom, the local economy is starting to rebound as manifested by the significant growth in the number of business licenses issued by the Department of Commerce during the last fiscal year. Government statistics disclosed a whooping 43.27 percent increase in revenues generated from business licensing fees in FY-1999, from $721,000 to $1.033 million. In 1998, the commerce department issued 877 new business licenses or a monthly average of 73 new investments. This is translated into 45 difference or a 5 percent drop compared to the previous year's tally.

NMC budget request for FY-01 slashed

The Northern Marianas College is faced with another year marred with financial constraints after the Office of Management and Budget slashed its budget request for fiscal year 2001 by $1.5 million. The OMB has given the college a $6.8 million budget ceiling for general operations. Majority of the amount will go to teaching and non-teaching personnel cost. The governor's budget office also capped the amount that can be allocated to the college under the Nonresident Workers Fund. Only about 15-20 percent of the total fund, or at least $1.17 million had been allotted to NMC. Allotment to the college from Public Law 10-66 will fund its vocational programs. NMC originally requested $1.57 million for the program.

Jan. 21, 2002

DPS jumpstarts efforts on cold case files

A newly created unit under the Criminal Bureau of Investigation has started reviewing 28 unsolved homicide cases pending in the last 23 years, amid fresh efforts to bring to justice victims of violent crimes. The Department of Public Safety has jump-started the CIB's Homicide Unit, a group whose sole focus will be devoted to solving cold crimes. Acting Police Commissioner Santiago Tudela assigned five police investigators to make up the new unit, headed by veteran police officer Sgt. Joe Aldan, as appointed supervisor. Four more police officers are expected to join the unit.

'Labor system is key vs takeover'

The best way to stave off any attempts at a federal takeover in labor and immigration in the CNMI is to put in place a system that is transparent and efficient, which will inherently be fairer for both the workers the employers. Gov. Juan N. Babauta stressed this point before the audience at the Saipan Chamber of Commerce's Installation Dinner Saturday night, adding that, by improving the labor and immigration system, Washington will be convinced of the CNMI's capacity to handle such issues by itself. "Through this, we make life easier for the business community, we make life better for nonresident workers, and we reassure the people in Washington who want to take over that there is no need to take over," Babauta said.

Congratulations!

2009 Tourism Industry Excellence Awards

"Tourism is Everybody's Business"

2008 Hell of the Marianas Century Cycle
(Most Outstanding Tourism Attraction)

Saipan Laolao Development
(Most Outstanding Destination Enhancement)

Remy P. Rebellon
(Individual Volunteer of the Year)

Team PDI
(Group/Organization Volunteer of the Year)

Russian Market Manager Manager Elitza Stoilova of Pacific Islands Club Saipan (Employee of the Year)

The Northern Marianas has named recipients of the first ever Tourism Industry Excellence Awards. Selected from among nominations made by members of the Marianas Visitors Authority, the winners were announced Jan. 14 at the MVA general membership meeting at Saipan World Resort.

The Fiscal Year 2009 winners were: 2008 Hell of the Marianas Century Cycle (Most Outstanding Tourism Attraction), Saipan Laolao Development (Most Outstanding Destination Enhancement), Russian Market Manager Manager Elitza Stoilova of Pacific Islands Club Saipan (Employee of the Year), Remy P. Rebellon (Individual Volunteer of the Year), and Team PDI (Group/Organization Volunteer of the Year).

This year marks the first time MVA members have been invited to recognize fellow tourism industry individuals, events, and projects for the tourism awards, which will now be an annual event.

Each of the winners made substantial contributions to tourism during the year. The December 2008 Hell of the Marianas Century Cycle had 93 participants and garnered international publicity for the Northern Marianas in various publications. The Laolao Bay project by Kumho Asiana Group began construction of a 54-room twin tower project worth over USD $54-million. Stoilova has served as chairwoman of the MVA Russian Ad Hoc Committee and has been instrumental in developing this growth market over the years. Rebellon is the assistant manager of Housekeeping/Housing at Fiesta Resort & Spa and volunteered for numerous tourism-related events including Taste of the Marianas, XTERRA, and Beautify CNMI clean-ups. Non-profit organization TEAM PDI founded and/or spearheaded numerous partnerships with private, public and NGO entities in various tourism promotion projects.

Nominations for the 2010 Tourism Industry Awards will be accepted through Sept. 30, 2010. Additional categories are the Tourism Promotion/Campaign of the Year and Most Outstanding Personal Contribution.

HAFA ADAI & TIROW WAY

MARIANAS VISITORS AUTHORITY

Opinion

Hafa Adai!
Saipan Tribune
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EDITORIAL

Averting chaos in Haiti

President Obama, flanked by an array of top administration officials, struck the right chords of empathy and urgency Thursday in announcing the first thrust of a major U.S. effort to address the unspeakable devastation in Haiti. But the president's moves to mobilize American civilian and military resources contained some notable and inexplicable omissions. Fortunately, he also promised that "much, much more help is on the way."

That is not to discount the assistance the president is sending immediately, nor his pledge of $100 million as a first slice of American relief. Still, for the time being, much of the aid is bottled up at the airport, and the logistical impediments to distributing it are staggering. In the capital, where untended bodies are rotting by the thousands, there is little sign of the massive U.S. and international response; the situation may be equally dire in outlying cities and towns whose communications with the outside world have been mostly severed. This would be dangerous even in a country without a crushing burden of poverty and hunger; in Haiti, where a great part of the population lives on less than $2 a day, it's treacherous. The risk of violence stemming from shortages of food, water, medicine and shelter will grow with each day that relief supplies fail to reach Haitians in their hour of need. U.S. and international officials must work fast—not only to save lives but also to avert chaos.

In addition to emergency life-saving equipment and relief materials, Haitian families, many of whose livelihoods will have been destroyed by the quake, will need money. More than 1 million Haitians, about a third of all adults, currently receive cash from relatives living abroad, most of them in the United States; those funds account for between a fifth and a third of Haiti's gross domestic product. Yet the Obama administration has balked at helping tens of thousands of Haitians currently here illegally by granting them temporary legal status, which would enable them to get work permits. This despite U.S. law that specifically allows the government to extend "temporary protected status" to undocumented immigrants if natural disasters or wars in their home countries make it impractical to deport them. Haitians should have received this benefit after four devastating storms struck the island in the space of four weeks in the fall of 2008. Other undocumented immigrant groups—from Nicaragua, Honduras, Sudan and elsewhere—have received temporary legal status; Mr. Obama should immediately extend it to Haitians so they can help their quake-stricken relatives at home.

There's more the president can do, including pressing the International Monetary Fund and other international institutions and creditor nations to forgive $641 million in debt owed by Haiti. That would be a modest first step toward what should be another goal of U.S. policy in the medium to long term—helping the Haitian government of President Rene Preval, whose own palace was destroyed in the temblor, start to regain its footing.

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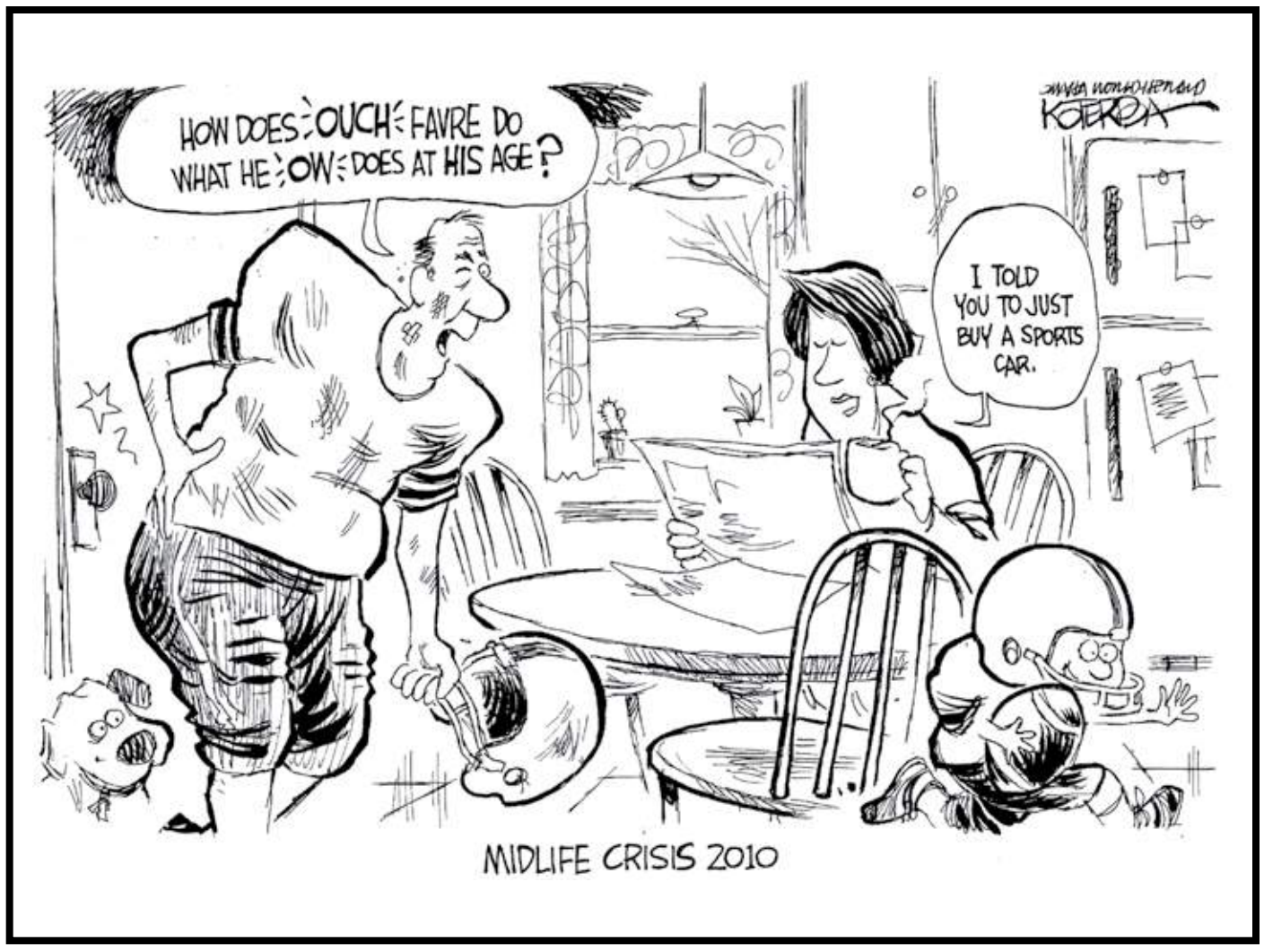

Obama's first year: A good start if only a start

By AARON DAVID MILLER
LOS ANGELES TIMES

With his poll numbers shrinking and pending healthcare legislation more controversial than ever, President Obama's critics are celebrating his much-diminished presidency.

And if unemployment numbers don't improve, the president may not just be a diminished president but a finished one.

Still, Barack Obama will complete one of the more successful first years of any modern president. Love him or hate him, Obama has demonstrated that he can be both president and presidential in the face of some galactic challenges.

And if his competence (and luck) hold and he learns how not to overreach, who knows? Obama may well emerge down the road as one of America's better presidents.

Obama's critics on the left and right, and a good many people in between, clearly don't see it that way. For them, he's both a threat and a disappointment. The president has validated Republicans' worst fears about big government, and he's betrayed his base's dreams for real reform. For both, Obama has emerged as a kind of empty suit, long on rhetoric, short on action, with a set of confused priorities that are driving the nation deeper into debt.

But like a judge in platform diving at the Olympics, any fair and honest evaluator of the president's first year needs to take into account the degree of difficulty of the dive.

Obama surely didn't inherit the nation-threatening crises of Lincoln or FDR. But the circumstances he confronted were certainly worse than any of his immediate predecessors—deep recession at home and two costly wars abroad.

By any reasonable standard (except that of a significant number of Republicans, who see him as Satan's finger on Earth no matter what the issue), he's done pretty well and then some.

His policies, to be sure, are mostly incomplete, with all the attendant uncertainties and questions. He is indeed still the question-mark president: Will the Afghan surge produce enough stability to allow the U.S. an exit, and by when? Will the economic stimulus and jobs packages produce economic growth and reduce unemployment? And will his signature accomplishment—health care—even pass, let alone expand coverage, improve care and reduce costs without bankrupting the country?

The fact is, we just don't know the answers yet. What we do know is that Obama has worked hard to juggle, manage, experiment and just maybe set in motion what the great sociologist Max Weber described as "proximate solutions to insoluble problems." The president has stopped the economic bleeding and the panic of recession, stabilized and moved to reform the financial sector, and gone farther and faster on healthcare than any of his predecessors.

Abroad, his policies are also works in progress. It's a cruel irony that the Nobel Peace Prize president may spend more of his time as a war leader in Afghanistan, Iraq and against al-Qaeda. And it's by no means clear that his multilateral diplomacy will generate the kind of leverage and support from others to deal with difficult challenges such as curbing Iran's nuclear program or promoting Arab-Israeli peace. After eight years of no diplomacy, however, it's worth a try.

Indeed, the president does well on the international stage. He's emerged as the well-spoken Energizer Bunny of American diplomacy. Today he's in Oslo for the Nobel; tomorrow he's in Copenhagen for climate change; yesterday he's in Cairo reaching out to the Arabs and Muslims; and the day before he's in Moscow doing arms control with the Russians.

To millions of Americans without jobs, and millions more worried about debt, foreclosure and deficits, none of this diplomacy means much. But Americans should still like to see their president being presidential abroad. And the president's orchestration of relief to victims of the recent earthquake in Haiti makes Americans feel proud. Indeed, it's critical in tough times that the president appear in charge and that he be presidential as persuader-, reassurer- and consoler-in-chief both abroad and at home.

Obama is out there (everywhere) in the face of crisis, trying to restore confidence until the economy improves.

Our greatest presidents (Washington, Lincoln and FDR, I would argue) were both transactors and transformers. They addressed the crisis at hand, left the nation stronger and created a legacy on some big political, economic or social issue that changed America for the better and forever.

Obama aspires to be one of those. As the first black president, he looks to Lincoln; inheriting the worst economic crisis since the Depression, he draws a line to FDR; and on the verge of pushing through huge healthcare reform, he sees LBJ (the master legislator) in the rearview mirror. If this isn't the behavior of a guy who sees himself as a historic figure, what is?

And herein lies the problem: A president who wants to be transformational is trapped in a dysfunctional political system of oppositional Republicans, unruly Democrats and overly grandiose goals of his own making. He has no large Roosevelt or Reagan coalitions to support him; no martyred predecessor to unite the nation; no nation-wrenching crisis that compels the public to accept bold change and follow his lead.

A year in, Obama may well be coming to realize that while politics is about what people want, governance is about what they get. And maybe, for a high-minded, ambitious and overly confident (even arrogant, at times) Barack Obama, this isn't such a bad thing for him—and for us.

Aaron Miller, a public policy scholar at the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, is the author of The Much Too Promised Land: America's Elusive Search for Arab-Israeli Peace.

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Office politics

By RIK and JANEL VILLEGAS
Special to the Saipan Tribune

Rik is a business instructor at NMC and Janel is a partner with BizResults, LLC (www.bizresults.org). They can be contacted at biz_results@yahoo.com.

It's the first day at your new job and you're excited about being a part of the team and the challenge it will offer. As you're setting up your desk, a coworker stops by to greet you and then starts to give you the lowdown on who to watch out for and how things really operate at the company. When you go to the break room, there are three people talking and after a few pleasantries they tell you the latest gossip about how the boss is showing favoritism to a particular worker who was just promoted.

You left your previous job because of the draining power plays that existed and now you realize the faces have changed, but the office politics have followed you to your new work. By the end of the day your enthusiasm has dwindled and you're wondering if you made the right decision.

Office politics is how people use and abuse their power for the purpose of getting an advantage that is beyond their legitimate authority. It involves how power gets worked out on a day-to-day basis and how co-workers treat each other. Politics within an organization can involve everyone from the mailroom clerk to the company president.

Some form of politics exists within every organization because people have ambitions and will try to gain advantage to some degree. However, there are companies that act like a Petri dish for office politics to thrive and canker the soul of the institution until it becomes unbearable. If you've had the misfortune of working in such an organization, you know that morale is dismal, turnover is rampant, and it's a struggle to get yourself out of bed each morning to face the gossip, backbiting, prejudice and bullying that are a normal part of the day.

The political cancer isn't isolated only within the organization because it can negatively affect customers, vendors, and any entity that has contact with the company. There is a lack of trust, people don't smile much, productivity is low, and business is usually slow.

At the root of office politics is the issue of manipulation. It begins when one or more people exert undue influence for their own gain. Those being manipulated either become players or victims in the psychological battle of wills. Some try to stay apolitical and stand on the sidelines, hoping that they won't be pulled into the game, but they become indirect supporters by not interfering with the manipulators' tactics.

The payoff for the manipulators is often increased pay or a promotion, but for many the reward is simply the greater power or control they feel over the lives of others. Manipulators will enlist as many people as possible into their nefarious plot because it strengthens their own position and minimizes their chances of being exposed. However, when people do take a stand against the manipulators and evidence is presented to expose their wrongdoings, the manipulators will have an explanation ready, but will also have an exit plan in place if it looks like they'll be caught.

We conducted an informal survey to ask what can be done to minimize office politics and here are some of the comments we received:

■ Politics start at the top of the organization and then trickles down. To minimize politics, the boss should not do things that encourage it, nor have close cliques that receive unfair favors.

■ Transparency is essential to help avoid speculation and gossip, or even the appearance of wrongdoing or unfairness. Secrets foster a dysfunctional organization and minimize the trust within the organization.

■ Establish channels for open communication that informs people on actions and issues, and allows them to voice their opinion without fear of reprisal. The environment should foster collaboration and people should be empowered to make decisions within their areas of responsibility without fear of losing their job.

■ Have an ombudsman that people can go to if they feel their grievances are not dealt with at the supervisory level. This person would have the authority to investigate a matter and take appropriate action to resolve an issue.

■ Identify groups or factions that have grievances and meet with them to hash out solutions.

■ Hiring and firing practices should be fair and practiced according to an agreed upon procedure. Manipulators have enormous power when they control the ability to hire and fire people at will without any legal repercussions. Those who earn their positions because of accomplishments or qualifications resent political hires—especially if the people can't do their job.

Is it possible to create an environment that minimizes office politics? It can happen if everyone from the top down takes the responsibility to be authentic, fair, truthful, and respectful in all their dealings. Such utopian workplaces do exist, but it is extremely difficult to get hired because no one wants to leave and there are too many applicants for each vacant position.

Japan's secret pact with US spurs debate

By JOHN M. GLIONNA
LOS ANGELES TIMES

KYOTO, Japan—Professor Koji Murata likes to ask his political science students a tough policy question: Is it ever proper for a government to lie to its constituents?

Class opinions vary, but Murata, a scholar of international security issues at Doshisha University in Kyoto, has his own view.

"I think it's OK to lie to the public for the public good," he said. "As long as what you say is not contrary to national intent, really important secrets must be kept."

The philosophical question has gained urgency in the wake of revelations here of a decades-old secret pact between Tokyo and Washington that allowed nuclear-armed U.S. naval vessels to dock at Japanese ports, despite laws here against it.

For 40 years, the government denied the existence of the 1969 agreement between President Richard Nixon and Prime Minister Eisaku Sato, the architect of Japan's post-World War II pacifism and staunch antinuclear policies.

Successive Japanese administrations were wary of a public outcry in a nation that suffered two devastating nuclear attacks 65 years ago.

Days after he took office in September, however, Prime Minister Yukio Hatoyama assigned a panel of government officials and historians to investigate Japan's role in the agreement.

Since the end of the Cold War, nuclear-armed U.S. ships have stopped docking in Japan, officials say.

The findings, due out this month, could further complicate a tense standoff between Hatoyama and the Obama administration over Japan's calls for the removal of a controversial U.S. military presence on the southern island of Okinawa.

"This revelation makes maintaining a stable alliance even more challenging," said Carl Baker, director of programs at the Center for Strategic and International Studies' Pacific Forum.

Many Japanese applauded Hatoyama's effort to create a more open government but said they felt betrayed by leaders who had publicly railed against nuclear arms, only to secretly acquiesce to the demands of a powerful nation.

Some are particularly incensed that the deal was struck with the United States, which dropped the atomic bombs on Nagasaki and Hiroshima at the end of World War II, killing as many as 220,000 people.

Bloggers have ridiculed Sato's 1974 Nobel Peace Prize, calling Japan's longest-serving postwar prime minister a hypocrite.

The agreement, which scholars say violates a Japanese law forbidding nuclear weapons from being made, possessed or stored on this country's territory, was made public by American officials after the U.S. military stopped sending nuclear-armed ships to Japan in 1991.

Despite the U.S. government's admission, Japanese leaders continued to deny that there was such a pact.

"They did not exist," then-Prime Minister Taro Aso said during a nationally televised news conference last year in response to a reporter's query about the pact and revealing documents.

The deal restoring Okinawa to Japanese sovereignty reportedly hinged, in its secret portions, on the U.S. retaining the right to dock nuclear warships at the base in case of emergency.

Security analysts were divided over Japan's handling of the secret agreement.

"I think it's always useful for citizens to know what their government is up to, even decades after the fact," said Jerome Cohen, a legal expert at the New York University School of Law. "We learn what to do for the future from our mistakes of the past."

Baker said the issue was more complex than learning a history lesson.

"Is it useful to bring out information about this pact now? These kinds of things are never useful when it comes to national security."

He said the revelation could play a role as Tokyo and Washington hammer out a deal on a new location for a controversial U.S. Marine Corps air station on Okinawa.

"This is another thorn to deal with, on top of everything else between the two nations," Baker said. "Part of me says that, like it or not, history has to be revealed. But how far do you take it? At what point do you trade off national security for full disclosure? Should we start disclosing past CIA operations? We know they existed.

"It's a tough issue. There's just no easy answer."

One former Japanese government official said that such secrets are kept by all nations.

"It isn't just Japan," said the former ambassador, who requested anonymity because of the sensitivity of the issue.

The ambassador said Sato was empowered to enter into such a deal to help Japan secure the return of Okinawa. But he said the deal should have been made public years ago.

"It was a lie, and they should have corrected it after the Cold War ended and the U.S. nuclear ships stopped coming," he said.

Murata, the political science professor, says the debate will continue in his classes as to how Japan should treat U.S. nuclear vessels in the future.

"It was a betrayal and it went on for decades," he said. "Now the government has finally come clean. But the question remains: With an unstable North Korea, how do we assist our closest ally without a secret pact?"

Letters to the Editor

Relax, breath, think

It comes to my attention that most decent citizens of the Commonwealth see to agree that taking time to discover what is going on in a given issue is better than rushing to judgment based on rumors. This is the opposite of what we see some few but loud rabble rousers are doing right now in the issue involving our governor.

It seems prudent, it seems the adult thing to do, to wait and see what the facts are before running around urging actions all out of proportion to what little is known about this right now. It seems pretty childish and betrays a sense of bitterness that some feel about who won or lost in the recent election. The bitterness seems to override their good sense.

It would be wise to take some time and see what the principals involved have to say and what an evidentiary hearing brings to light before rushing to push for extreme measures. In fact, overreacting cheapens your believability and makes it appear you have only agenda instead of reason guiding you. The rest of us see that the sky is not falling, so claiming it makes you look a bit silly.

While a few let their bitterness make them appear easily "outraged" and easily "appalled," it is way too early to suggest that Mr. Inos take over as governor. I would suggest you try some due diligence in place of your misplaced activism. Patience is a virtue.

Rep. Stanley T. McGinnis Torres
Capital Hill, Saipan

Be humane

I was never in favor of the governor and even up to now, I do not agree with the way he runs the government and the way he particularly treats aliens, but on the part of his request for a masseuse, I consider and understand his explanation. He did try very hard to contact the person in charge to temporarily release the masseuse.

His request to release the masseuse was an emergency case wherein he was in much pain and because he is the governor, we will not allow anything to happen to him. Of course, we will protect our governor, including his health. Besides, it was just a matter of hours and not the whole day or days that the masseuse left the prison, and the masseuse should not be accused of anything; she was just following instructions from the governor. She didn't know if it was legal or not. What she knew is a high power guy wanted her to be out and it was not her decision to be out. She was allowed by the DOC to get out.

For those people who don't understand how important a doctor or a masseuse is to a person in pain, to have that someone whom he trusts and needs to relieve the pain, maybe you should also be sick for you to understand what you would do in this painful time. You would do anything and you would do this thing if you are also sick and want to relieve the pain. We could even see a person sacrificing his life for a President to be saved. How much more the person governing the island where we live? Be humane and considerate.

Remy Tadaklan
Chalan Kiya, Saipan

The Weather

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam Homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

5-Day Forecast for Saipan and Tinian

TODAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY	MONDAY
Partly cloudy and breezy with a slight chance of showers. Northeast winds 20 to 25 mph.	Mostly sunny with isolated showers. Northeast winds 15 to 20 mph.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers. Breezy at times.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers. Breezy at times.
▲83° ▼74°	▲84° ▼75°	▲85° ▼76°	▲86° ▼76°	▲86° ▼76°

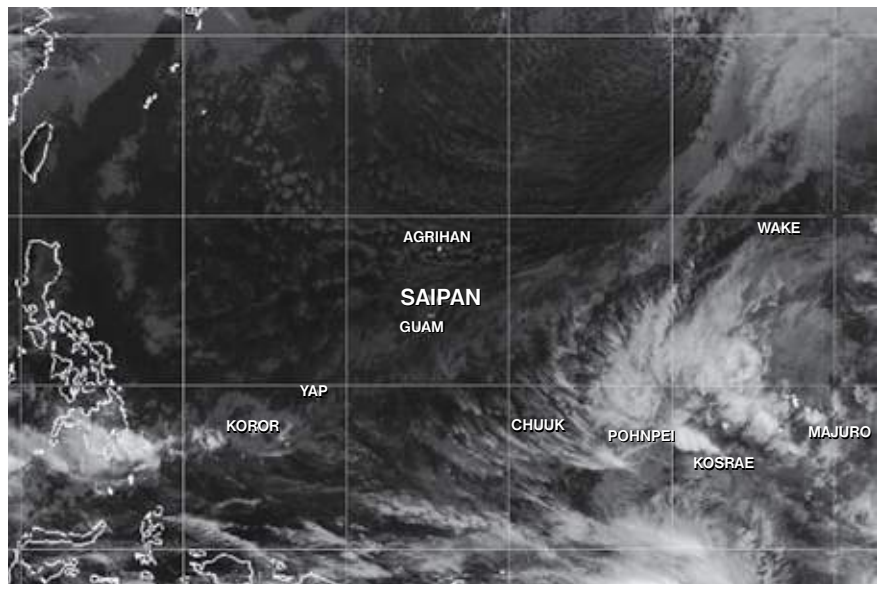
Micronesia

Guam and Rota	Sunny	▲82	▼73
Palau	Showers	▲87	▼78
Yap	Cloudy	▲87	▼77
Chuuk	Showers	▲90	▼78
Pohnpei	Showers	▲85	▼79
Kosrae	Showers	▲85	▼76
Majuro	Showers	▲85	▼80

Around The Globe

Auckland	Thunderstorms	▲74	▼65
Beijing	Mostly Sunny	▲23	▼ 5
Hong Kong	Mostly Cloudy	▲75	▼59
Honolulu	Showers	▲76	▼68
London	Cloudy	▲43	▼37
Los Angeles	Rain	▲54	▼48
Manila	Partly Sunny	▲89	▼72
Melbourne	Cloudy	▲88	▼67
Miami	Partly Sunny	▲83	▼69
New York	Partly Sunny	▲39	▼33
Osaka	Showers	▲51	▼32
Paris	Dreary	▲42	▼41
Pusan	Mostly Cloudy	▲38	▼14
Rome	Showers	▲51	▼34
Salem	Showers	▲48	▼33
San Francisco	Rain	▲52	▼45
Seoul	Mostly Sunny	▲28	▼ 7
Tokyo	Showers	▲50	▼34
Washington, DC	Rain/Snow	▲40	▼31

Yesterday's Satellite Image



PICTURE TIME: 1:00PM, WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 20, 2010
Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

A cold front at 25N170E becomes a shear line at about 23N168E just north of Wake Island. The shear line continues southwestward to south of Guam at 10N145E to south of Yap and over Koror to end beyond 6N130E. Scattered showers are found within 400 miles northwest of the cold front within 250 miles northwest of the shear line including Yap and Palau. Another shear line northeast of Wake Island extends from east of 23N180 to meet the cold front and shear line mentioned above at 24N169E. Scattered showers are found within 300 miles north of the shear line. A near-equatorial trough extends east-northeastward from EQ139E to a circulation centered east of Pohnpei at 7N162E. Scattered showers and a few thunderstorms are found between 6N and 13N from 156E to 166E around Pohnpei, Kosrae and Kwajalein. A weak circulation centered at about 5N180 is producing scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms between the equator and 8N from 175E to beyond 180. This area is east and southeast of Majuro.

Tides

Saipan Harbor

4:55 AM	Today	Low Tide:	0.4 Feet
11:25 AM	Today	High Tide:	1.8 Feet
6:08 PM	Today	Low Tide:	0.6 Feet
11:27 PM	Today	High Tide:	1.4 Feet

Sunrise/Sunset

Today	6:47 AM	6:09 PM
Friday	6:47 AM	6:10 PM
Saturday	6:47 AM	6:10 PM
Sunday	6:47 AM	6:11 PM
Monday	6:47 AM	6:11 PM

Moonrise/Moonset

Today	10:12 AM	10:48 PM
Friday	10:49 AM	11:38 PM
Saturday	11:28 AM	
Sunday	12:12 PM	12:30 AM
Monday	1:01 PM	1:26 PM

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- BIRTHDAY GREETINGS
  A way for families and friends to greet their loved ones, accompanied by a picture of the person celebrating his/her birthday.
- BUSINESS
  Corporate donations, volunteer work, promotions, granting of awards, team-building exercises, meetings and other activities by members of the business community.
- SAMU'T SARI
  Pictures from the islands' Filipino community, primarily focusing on Filipino activities, gatherings, get-togethers, volunteer work, etc.
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  Pictures of off-island travels. Contributors may submit up to 10 pictures for consideration.

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  Announcements of upcoming activities of organizations, community clubs, government agencies, and private companies.
- CAMPUS BULLETIN
  Announcements of upcoming activities in public and private schools, as well as calendar of activities. May include PTSA meetings, enrollment procedures.

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- Photos must have been taken in the last two months.
- For birthday greetings, must be submitted no later than 12 noon of the previous day to make it to next day's edition.

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- Log on to the internet at www.nmicrimestoppers.com

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FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF JANUARY 13, 2009

DEPARTURES

SAIPAN-ROTA (ROP)

C09597	11:30am	12:05pm	1, 7

ROTA (ROP)-GUAM

C09597	12:40pm	1:10pm	1, 7

SAIPAN-GUAM

C09317	4:25am	5:15am	Daily
C09313	8:30am	9:20am	Daily
C09597	11:30am	1:10pm	1, 7 via ROP
C09601	12:20pm	1:10pm	4, 5
C09603	3:15pm	4:05pm	Daily
C09605	6:20pm	7:10pm	Daily
C09599	9:20pm	10:10pm	Daily

SAIPAN-NAGOYA (NGO)

NW287	6:00am	7:30pm	1,3,4,5,6,7 via NRT
NW638	8:00am	10:50am	2,3,4,5,6,7

SAIPAN-NARITA (NRT)

NW287	6:00am	8:40am	Daily
NW297	4:45pm	7:30pm	Daily
NW289	5:00pm	7:45pm	Daily

SAIPAN-BUSAN (PUS)

OZ608	3:20am	6:50am	1, 4, 5, 7

SAIPAN-SEOUL (ICN)

OZ604	2:10am	6:00am	1
OZ604	2:40am	6:30am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7
OZ119	4:00am	11:25am	Daily via Osaka
		Arrive OSA 6:40am, leave OSA 9:30am	
OZ606	3:20pm	7:00pm	2, 4, 6, 7

SAIPAN-SHANGHAI (PVG)

FM844	2:50am	5:40am	2, 6

SAIPAN-GUANGZHOU (CAN)

CZ3008	3:30am	6:40am	2, 6

SAIPAN-MANILA (MNL)

OZ604/701	2:10am	11:50am	1 via ICN
OZ604/701	2:40am	11:50am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN
OZ606/715	3:20pm	11:30pm	7 via ICN
OZ608/705	3:20am	1:30am+1	1, 4, 5, 7 via PUS
C09603/893	3:15pm	9:10pm	3, 5 via GUM-PALAU
C09605/933	6:20pm	9:40pm	Daily via GUM
C09599/PR111	9:20pm	7:50am+1	1, 3, 5, 6, 7 via GUM

SAIPAN-HONG KONG

OZ604/721	2:10am	12:00pm	1 via ICN
OZ604/721	2:40am	12:00pm	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN
OZ606/749	3:20pm	11:00pm	4, 6, 7 via ICN

ARRIVALS

ROTA (ROP)-SAIPAN

C09598	3:10am	3:45am	5, 6
C09312	1:20pm	1:55pm	6

GUAM-ROTA (ROP)

C09598	2:00am	2:30am	5, 6
C09312	12:10pm	12:40pm	6

GUAM-SAIPAN

C09316	2:00am	2:50am	1, 2, 3, 4, 7
C09598	2:00am	3:45am	5, 6 via ROP
C09596	7:00am	7:50am	Daily
C09600	10:05am	10:55am	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7
C09312	12:10pm	1:55pm	6 via ROP
C09602	1:50pm	2:40pm	1, 4, 5, 7
C09604	4:50pm	5:40pm	Daily
C09606	8:00pm	8:50pm	Daily

NAGOYA (NGO)-SAIPAN

NW288	12:05pm	1:35am+1	1,3,4,5,6,7 via NRT
NW277	8:30pm	1:00am+1	3,6
NW639	9:00pm	1:35am+1	Daily

NARITA (NRT)-SAIPAN

NW290	10:00am	2:35pm	Daily
NW298	10:05am	2:50pm	Daily
NW288	9:0pm	1:35am+1	Daily

BUSAN (PUS)-SAIPAN

OZ607	9:00pm	2:10am+1	3, 4, 6, 7

SEOUL (ICN)-SAIPAN

OZ605	9:00am	2:20pm	2, 4, 6, 7
OZ120	7:10pm	2:20am+1	Daily via Osaka
		Arrive OSA 8:50pm, leave OSA 9:50pm	
OZ603	7:40pm	1:10am+1	7
OZ603	8:10pm	1:30am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6

SHANGHAI (PVG)-SAIPAN

FM843	7:15pm	1:50am+1	1, 5

GUANGZHOU (CAN)-SAIPAN

CZ3007	7:30pm	2:40am+1	1, 5

MANILA (MNL)-SAIPAN

OZ716/605	12:30am	2:20pm	4,6 via ICN
OZ706/607	3:35am	2:10am+1	3,4,6,7 via PUS
OZ702/603	1:10pm	1:10am+1	7 via ICN
OZ702/603	1:10pm	1:30am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via ICN
PR110/C09596	10:10pm	7:50am+1	1, 3, 5, 6, 7 via GUM
C0934/9596	11:10pm	7:50am+1	Daily via GUM
C0892/9596	10:10pm	7:50am+1	3,5 via PALAU-GUM
OZ704/605	11:55pm	2:20pm+1	1, 3, 5, 6 via ICN

HONG KONG-SAIPAN

OZ724/605	12:30am	2:20pm	2,4,6,7 via ICN
OZ750/605	1:00am	2:20pm	2,4,6,7 via ICN
OZ722/603	1:30pm	1:10am+1	7 via ICN
OZ722/603	1:30pm	1:30am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via ICN

Editor's Note: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); CO: Continental; FM: Shanghai Airlines; PR: Philippine Airlines; NW: Northwest; OZ: Asiana
ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. The Saipan Tribune is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)

FREEDOM AIR FLIGHT SCHEDULE

Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency
Guam-Rota			
FRE 100	7:00am	7:30am	Daily
Rota-Saipan			
FRE 100	7:50am	8:20am	Daily
Saipan-Rota			
FRE 200	9:00am	9:30am	Daily
Rota-Guam			
FRE 200	9:50am	10:15am	Daily
Guam-Rota			
FRE 300	4:00pm	4:30pm	Daily
Rota-Saipan			
FRE 300	4:50pm	5:25pm	Daily
Saipan-Rota			
FRE 400	6:00pm	6:30pm	Daily
Rota-Guam			
FRE 400	6:45pm	7:15pm	Daily
Saipan-Tinian			
FRE 101	6:45am	6:55am	Daily
FRE 103	7:30am	7:40am	Daily
FRE 105	8:00am	8:10am	Daily
FRE 107	8:40am	8:50am	Daily
FRE 109*	9:10am	9:20am	Daily
FRE 111*	10:45am	10:55am	Daily

Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency
FRE 113	11:40am	11:50am	Daily
FRE 115	1:00pm	1:10pm	Daily
FRE 117	2:30pm	2:40pm	Daily
FRE 119	4:00pm	4:10pm	Daily
FRE 121	4:40pm	4:50pm	Daily
FRE 123 *	5:40pm	5:50pm	Daily
FRE 125 *	6:00pm	6:10pm	Daily
Tinian-Saipan w/ connecting flights to Rota or Guam**			
FRE 102	7:05am	7:15am	Daily
FRE 104	7:50am	8:00am	Daily
FRE 106**	8:20am	8:30am	Daily
FRE 108**	9:00am	9:10am	Daily
FRE 110	10:00am	10:10am	Daily
FRE 112	11:05am	11:15am	Daily
FRE 114	12:00pm	12:10pm	Daily
FRE 116	1:30pm	1:40pm	Daily
FRE 118	2:50pm	3:00pm	Daily
FRE 120**	4:20pm	4:30pm	Daily
FRE 122**	5:00pm	5:10pm	Daily
FRE 124	6:05pm	6:15pm	Daily
FRE 126	6:20pm	6:30pm	Daily

UoG gets $141,000 for Sea Grant Extension Program

WASHINGTON, D.C.—The National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration has awarded $141,000 to the University of Guam for the Sea Grant Extension Program, according to Guam Delegate Madeleine Z. Bordallo yesterday.

Bordallo supported an increased appropriation of $58 million to the National Sea Grant College Program in the Fiscal Year 2010 Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act. The increased FY10 appropriation allows NOAA to expand its support of projects nationwide including the continued development of a Sea Grant Extension Program at the University of Guam. The program will conduct research on issues affecting our coastal ecosystem, provide information on sound development practices, and will help develop concise marine education materials for students.

"The financial assistance received today from the National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration will continue the research and education already underway at the University of Guam," Bordallo said. "The research conducted by the Sea Grant Extension Program at the University of Guam will help address issues specific to Guam and our coastal and marine areas. I thank Dr. Robert Underwood for his work in securing these funds, and I look forward to this federal financial assistance benefitting our community."

University of Guam President Dr. Robert Underwood said, "The University of Guam is very appreciative of the support and hard work of Congresswoman Bordallo on this matter. Achieving Sea Grant status for the University is a strategic goal of the University and this helps us reach another milestone in the process." ***(PR)***

BIRTHDAY SHOUTOUT

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Happy birthday to an amazing mother and grandmother, Rose White! "More beautiful than all the flowers that blossom, is the heart of a loving mother. I thank God in all my remembrance of you (Phil 1:3). We love you! From your children and grandchildren.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Happy birthday greetings go out to Patty girl Aldan Cepeda who is celebrating her 11th birthday today, Jan. 21, 2010. Happy birthday Patty, we love you very much and many blessings. From the family.

GUAHAN BRIEFS

Guam gets $403,112 USDA grant

WASHINGTON, D.C.—Guam Delegate Madeleine Z. Bordallo announced yesterday that the U.S. Department of Agriculture has awarded $403,112 to Guam for the management of pests and diseases and disaster prevention. A total of $45 million has been allocated for projects nationwide through Section 10201 of the 2008 Farm Bill. These projects will support the enhancement of early plant pest detection, surveillance, and threat identification.

"The funds received today will help protect our island's plant life from invasive species and plant diseases," Bordallo said. "The funding from the Obama Administration will assist our island's efforts in management of invasive species and plant diseases. I look forward to this federal financial assistance benefiting our island's agricultural sector." ***(PR)***

DEIS Summary Fact Sheets now online

GUAM—Gov. Felix Camacho announced yesterday that the Draft Environmental Impact Statement for the military buildup has been summarized and is available to the community. The summaries, titled DEIS Fact Sheets, can be found online at www.one.guam.gov. Each volume of the DEIS is broken down into reader friendly presentations. Included are summaries, key actions identified in each volume, and summaries of specific issues that include commentaries from the Governor's Advisory Consulting Team. Assessments of the alternatives discussed within the DEIS are also offered.

"These summaries will help our people make informed judgments and comment effectively to insure the interests of our community are protected," said Camacho. "Rest assured the people of Guam will have a voice in this process, both as individuals and collectively as a community. I strongly urge everyone to review these summaries as soon as possible."

For more information about the DEIS Summary Fact Sheets, copies are available online at www.one.guam.gov. ***(PR)***

H1N1 Vaccine School Vaccination Campaign

DPH will be back at the schools to administer the 2nd dose of the H1N1 vaccine to students 9 years old and younger

Students and school staff who want to receive their H1N1 vaccine for the first time can also get in line!

Consent forms are available at the school office. Turn in signed consent forms back to school before your vaccination date!

School Vaccination Schedule

January 20th – Wednesday
Dandan Head Start
San Antonio Head Start
WSR Head Start

January 21st – Thursday
Kagman Head Start
Oleai Head Start

January 22nd – Friday
Garapan Head Start
Tanapag Head Start

January 27th – Wednesday
Kagman Elementary School
Garapan Elementary School

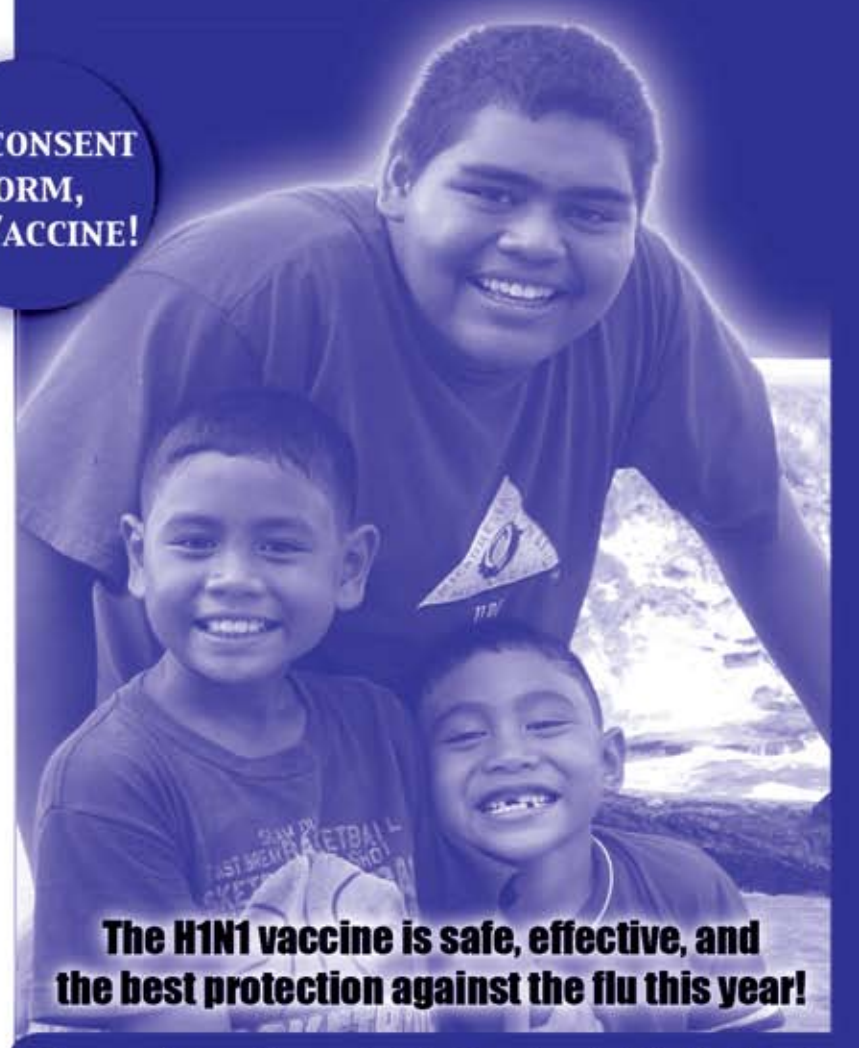
January 28th – Thursday
Dandan Elementary School
Oleai Elementary School
San Vicente Elementary School

January 29th – Friday
Koblerville Elementary School
San Antonio Elementary School
WSR Elementary School

Rota, Tinian, and Private School Schedules are being finalized

Visit any health clinic to get vaccinated.

No consent form, no vaccine!



The H1N1 vaccine is safe, effective, and the best protection against the flu this year!

For more information, contact the Department of Public Health at 234-8950 or email fluwatchcnmi@gmail.com.

CDC

Business

Kraft Foods, Cadbury agree $19.5B deal

LONDON (AP)—After months of fierce resistance, Cadbury's about-face to accept a sweetened 11.5 billion pound ($19.5 billion) takeover from Kraft Foods Inc.—forming the world's biggest candy company—has alarmed British unions, lawmakers and chocolate lovers.

With Cadbury shareholders expected to agree to the deal and a rival bid from The Hershey Co. looking less likely, opponents fear the U.S. multinational's impact on one of Britain's oldest and best-loved brands.

Just days after Cadbury declared its suitor a "low growth" company with a "long history of underperformance," the British maker of Dairy Milk chocolates and Dentyne gum capitulated to a raised bid of 840 pence ($13.78) per share.

The deal, comprising 500 pence cash and 0.1874 new Kraft shares for each Cadbury share, is a 9 percent premium to its previous 770 pence offer and 50 percent higher than Cadbury's market value before Kraft, based in Northfield, Illinois, went public with its approach in September.

Cadbury stock was trading just under that level, at 836.5 pence, up 3.6 percent, in Tuesday afternoon trade. Shares in Kraft, the maker of Toblerone chocoloate, Velveeta processed cheese and Oreo cookies, were down 2.5 percent at $28.85.

The combination of the pair would create the world's biggest confectionary company, replacing Mars Inc., and Kraft CEO Irene Rosenfeld said the deal provides "both immediate value certainty and upside potential" as she tried to appease concerns about the loss of Cadbury's iconic status.

The company's roots go back to the grocery store opened in 1824 by John Cadbury in Birmingham, central England. A Quaker, Cadbury believed cocoa and drinking chocolate were healthy alternatives to alcohol, considered to add to the miseries of the working class.

The popular Dairy Milk bars were launched in 1905 as a challenge to dominant Swiss chocolate makers.

"We have great respect for Cadbury's brands, heritage and people," Rosenfeld said. "We believe they will thrive as part of Kraft Foods."

But unions are worried there were no clear guarantees from Kraft that it won't switch manufacturing of some of the 186-year-old company's chocolates to eastern Europe, sacrificing thousands of British jobs.

"This is a very sad day for U.K. manufacturing. A successful, iconic, independent U.K. brand will now be owned by a giant company with massive debt," said Jennie Formby of the Unite union, which had campaigned against Kraft's offer.

"We have very real fears about how Kraft will repay its debt, particularly as it has ratcheted it up still further in order to purchase Cadbury," she added.

Four Labour Party lawmakers, whose electorates cover two key factories in Britain's manufacturing heartland, said in a joint statement they were worried "about the kind of future that Cadbury's would have as part of this giant multinational whose corporate priorities are decided a long way away from the West Midlands."

The deal, one of the largest transnational takeovers since the credit crunch, is further sign that food companies are seeking to gain scale by combining, after Mars bought William Wrigley Jr. Co. in 2008 for $23 billion.

Chocolate wars

British confectioner Cadbury has agreed to a $19.5 billion takeover offer from U.S. food group Kraft Foods.

	kraft foods	Cadbury
Headquarters	Northfield, Ill.	London
Revenue (2008)	$42.2 billion	$7.8 billion
Employees (2008)	98,000	45,000
CEO	Irene Rosenfeld	H. Todd Stitzer
Net income (2008)	$2.9 billion	$530 million
Top products	Beverage, cheese, dairy, snack foods, candy and convenience foods	Chocolate and other candy, gum, soft drinks

Source: Hoovers, company reports

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Saving the euro from a Greek tragedy

BRUSSELS (AP)—Could Greece drag down Europe?

EU finance ministers are pressing their indebted and riot-prone Balkan member to embrace a massive austerity plan and plug its debilitating deficit. But with markets skeptical and the appetite for more bailouts at a low, there are deepening concerns that a Greek meltdown could deal a severe blow to the very European idea of a common currency, and set off a domino effect through Italy, Spain, and Portugal.

Keen to keep Greece from crashing the euro, European Union governments pressed the country Tuesday to stick to a painful austerity program that could cut its ballooning debt at the risk of social unrest.

The EU's economy commissioner Joaquin Almunia warned of a domino effect, saying Greece's debt crisis is already hurting other indebted countries that use the euro as nervous bond markets hike borrowing costs on fears that Greece could default or demand an unprecedented bailout from reluctant EU states.

"The fate of one is the fate of all," he said. "This situation in Greece is having effects in other countries."

Almunia warned the others in the firing line—such as Ireland, Italy, Spain and Portugal—that they may also need to take tough action to avoid a Greek tragedy and the higher costs for selling government debt.

"It's up to them to take decisions to be better protected in the face of this nervousness of the markets," he said.

At stake is the very credibility of the euro, a currency union with a central bank but no central economy management. The economic crisis has exposed the flaws of 16 countries moving in different directions to spend or save their way out of trouble.

Citigroup loses $7.8B in 4Q

NEW YORK (AP)—Citigroup Inc. became the latest bank to take a cautious view of consumers' credit problems, reporting a $7.77 billion fourth-quarter loss due to failed loans and the costs of repaying $20 billion in government bailout money.

Even with the loss, Citigroup, the hardest hit of the big U.S. banks during the credit crisis and recession, plans to give big bonuses this month to its top employees.

The earnings report Tuesday, which met analysts' expectations, reflected Citigroup's struggles and changing status in the banking industry. The company was forced to set aside $8.18 billion to cover the loans consumers can't repay, joining other big lenders who are still losing money on loans. But Citigroup, having been forced to shed its big investment banking and brokerage businesses during the banking crisis, lacked those buffers against losses that other major financial companies still have.

The company's focus, therefore is on loans, which are deeply troubled but showing some very early signs of improvement. For example, the addition to Citigroup's loan reserves was down 10 percent from the third quarter, and 36 percent from a year earlier.

Google puts China cell phones on hold amid dispute

SAN FRANCISCO (AP)—Google has delayed the debut of two mobile phones designed to connect with its Internet services in China, widening the void that might be opened if the company and Beijing can't resolve their rift over online censorship and security.

The phones, made by Motorola and Samsung, use the Android operating system, created by Google to steer people to its search engine and other services. China Unicom Ltd. was supposed to be the carrier.

The postponement Tuesday is the latest aftershock from Google's threat to shut down its search engine and other services in China, which could cut off the world's most populous country from Google through any kind of computer or phone.

Google intends to maintain its China-based search engine only if the government relents on rules requiring the censorship of content the government considers subversive. The ultimatum came last week after Google said it uncovered a computer attack that tried to plunder its software coding and the e-mail accounts of human rights activists protesting Chinese policies.

Putting the sale of the Android-powered phones on hold is a logical extension of Google's threat. It doesn't make sense to sell the devices in a market where key services might be restricted or unavailable, said Forrester Research analyst Charles Golvin.

BUSINESS BRIEFS

Foreign demand for US assets rises in November

WASHINGTON (AP)—Foreign demand for long-term U.S. financial assets jumped sharply in November, rising to the highest level in more than two years even though China's holdings of Treasury securities fell. Analysts viewed the big increase as a sign of renewed optimism among foreign investors about economic growth prospects in the United States. Continued strong demand for U.S. debt is critical to financing America's soaring budget deficits and keeping domestic interest rates low enough to support a sustained economic recovery. The Treasury Department said Tuesday that foreigners purchased $126.8 billion more in assets than they sold in November, the largest gain since an increase of $128.9 billion in October 2007.

Bernanke asks GAO to review Fed role in AIG rescue

WASHINGTON (AP)—Federal Reserve Chairman Ben Bernanke took the unusual step Tuesday of asking Congress' investigative arm to conduct a "full review" of the Fed's role in bailing out insurance giant American International Group. The Fed chief's move is aimed at defusing criticism of the government's $182 billion rescue. The bailout sparked public outrage and demands in Congress for more information, especially after it was revealed that millions in bonuses would go to employees in the AIG division most responsible for the company's need for a bailout. The House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform has a probe under way that seeks to provide a fuller picture of the AIG bailout. Those lawmakers are especially interested in details involving billions in payments AIG made to Goldman Sachs and other Wall Street firms that did business with the insurer. Some lawmakers want to know why those firms were fully paid and why concessions weren't demanded.

IBM's profit rises 9 pct, revenue growth resumes

SAN FRANCISCO (AP)—IBM Corp. said Tuesday that it managed a 9 percent increase in profit in the last quarter as the technology company's revenue grew for the first time in a year and a half. It also offered a slightly better forecast for 2010, although IBM already had been telling investors it was "well ahead" of the pace it would have needed to reach its previous target. IBM shares dipped in extended trading. The revenue boost in the latest quarter, which ended Dec. 31, was just under 1 percent. And it was helped by currency fluctuations. At constant values for the dollar, IBM's revenue would have dropped 5 percent. But even the slight increase was notable because the last time IBM's revenue had risen was the July-September quarter in 2008. Some analysts have been worried that IBM would have trouble continuing its streak of using cost cuts to squeeze out higher profits.

STOCK Portfolio

ASIAN MARKETS

AUSTRALIA 4,895.100 Up 5.500 (+0.11%)

HONG KONG 21,245.21 Down 432.77 (-2.00%)

JAKARTA 2,665.929 Down 0.142 (-0.01%)

TOKYO 10,737.52 Down 27.38 (-0.25%)

K. LUMPUR 1,305.79 Up 5.44 (+0.42%)

MANILA 3,083.86 Down 0.71 (-0.02%)

SINGAPORE 2,895.06 Down 17.86 (-0.61%)

SEOUL 1,714.38 Up 4.16 (+0.24%)

BANGKOK 727.91 Down 8.57 (-1.16%)

LEADING INDICATORS

DOW 10,725.43 +115.78

NASDAQ 2,320.40 +32.41

S&P 1,150.23 0.00

MONEY MARKET

Australian Dollar	1.0913
British Pound	0.6133
Canadian Dollar	1.0354
Chinese Renmbi	6.8273
Euro	0.7043
Hong Kong Dollar	7.7651
Indian Rupee	45.895
Indonesian Rupiah	9330
Japanese Yen	91.135
Malaysian Ringgit	3.36
New Zealand Dollar	1.373
Philippine Peso	46.035
Singapore Dollar	1.3956
South Korean Won	1138.05
Swiss Franc	1.0386
Taiwan Dollar	31.82
Thailand Baht	32.925

In U.S. dollar terms

Source: Associated Press

Nation

In epic upset, GOP's Brown wins Mass. Senate race

BOSTON (AP)—In an epic upset in liberal Massachusetts, Republican Scott Brown rode a wave of voter anger to win the U.S. Senate seat held by the late Edward M. Kennedy for nearly half a century, leaving President Barack Obama's health care overhaul in doubt and marring the end of his first year in office.

Addressing an exuberant victory celebration Tuesday night, Brown declared he was "ready to go to Washington without delay" as the crowd chanted, "Seat him now." Democrats indicated they would, deflating a budding controversy over whether they would try to block Brown long enough to complete congressional passage of the health care plan he has promised to oppose.

"The people of Massachusetts have spoken. We welcome Scott Brown to the Senate and will move to seat him as soon as the proper paperwork has been received," said Majority Leader Harry Reid, D-Nev. Massachusetts Secretary of State William Galvin said he would notify the Senate on Wednesday that Brown had been elected.

The loss by the once-favored Democrat Martha Coakley in the Democratic stronghold was a stunning embarrassment for the White House after Obama rushed to Boston on Sunday to try to save the foundering candidate. Her defeat on Tuesday signaled big political problems for the president's party this fall when House, Senate and gubernatorial candidates are on the ballot nationwide.

Brown's victory was the third major loss for Democrats in statewide elections since Obama became president. Republicans won governors' seats in Virginia and New Jersey in November.

"I have no interest in sugarcoating what happened in Massachusetts," said Sen. Robert Menendez, the head of the Senate Democrats' campaign committee. "There is a lot of anxiety in the country right now. Americans are understandably impatient."

Brown will become the 41st Republican in the 100-member Senate, which could allow the GOP to block the president's health care legislation. Democrats needed Coakley to win for a 60th vote to thwart Republican filibusters. The trouble may go deeper: Democratic lawmakers could read the results as a vote against Obama's broader agenda, weakening their support for the president. And the results could scare some Democrats from seeking office this fall.

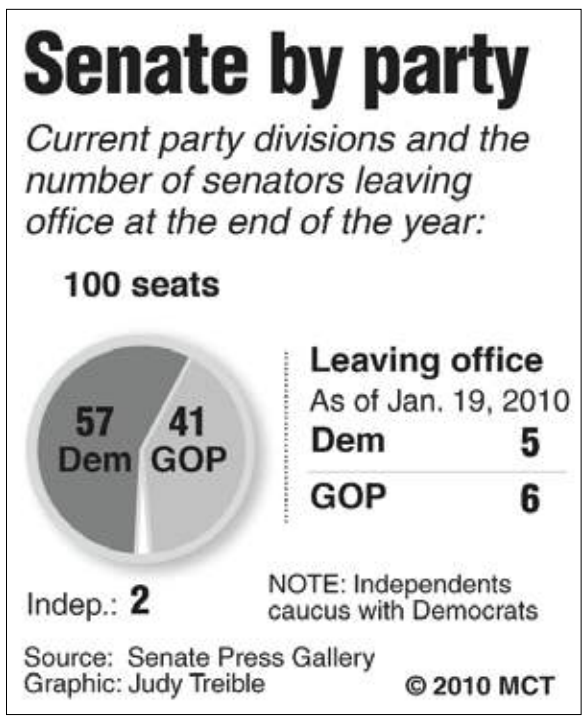
The Republican will finish Kennedy's unexpired term, facing re-election in 2012.

Brown led by 52 per cent to 47 percent with all but 3 percent of precincts counted. Turnout was exceptional for a special election in January, with light snow reported in parts of the state. More voters showed up at the polls Tuesday than in any non-presidential general election in Massachusetts since 1990.

One day shy of the first anniversary of Obama's swearing-in, the election played out amid a backdrop of animosity and resentment from voters over persistently high unemployment, Wall Street bailouts, exploding federal budget deficits and partisan wrangling over health care.

"I voted for Obama because I wanted change. ... I thought he'd bring it to us, but I just don't like the direction that he's heading," said John Triolo, 38, a registered independent who voted in Fitchburg.

Scott Brown
Republican wins U.S. Senate seat from Massachusetts
Early years
Born 1959; grew up in Wakefield, Mass.
Education B.A. cum laude Tufts University, 1981; law degree, Boston College Law School, 1985
Career
1995 Board of Selectmen, Wrentham, Mass.
1999-2004 Mass. House
2004-present Mass. Senate; one of five Republicans in the 40-member chamber
Issues Veterans, sexual offenders, ban same-sex marriage, opposes Obama health plan
Military service
National Guard Lt. Col., lawyer, in the Judge Advocate Generals Corps; served for 30 years
Of note
Avid triathlete; posed nude for Cosmopolitans's Sexiest Man in America, 1982
Source: Mass.gov, candidate's Web site, Boston Globe
Graphic: Judy Treible
© 2010 MCT



Evacuations begin in Los Angeles before 3rd storm

LOS ANGELES (AP)—The second in a series of powerful storms wreaked havoc Tuesday on Southern California, crushing a woman to death with a fallen tree, smashing windows and flooding coastal neighborhoods.

San Diego Sheriff's Lt. Mike Munsey said the woman was killed when a eucalyptus tree with a 10-foot diameter trunk crushed her trailer and a neighbor's in a mobile home park near El Cajon. Emergency crews needed a crane to move the tree and extricate her body from the wreckage of her home.

Los Angeles County fire officials said they would issue mandatory evacuation orders for about 587 homes in flood-prone foothill areas beginning early Wednesday in anticipation of the next storm.

Police officers and firefighters went door-to-door in the Tujunga neighborhood of Los Angeles, asking residents of about 200 hillside homes to evacuate by morning.

Forecasters said thunderstorms and what looked like tornados surged ashore with fierce winds in Santa Barbara, Los Angeles County beach towns and areas of Orange and San Diego counties.

In San Pedro, a working class neighborhood near the Port of Los Angeles, several blocks were flooded with about six feet of water when storm drains clogged with debris.

Jerry Bazan spent the afternoon sweeping several inches of water out of his living room, where toys, sodden clothing and furniture were strewn about and a thick layer of mud coated the floor.

Bazan said the water rose to about two feet in his apartment within a matter of minutes and some of it was contaminated with sewage. Outside, the water lifted a Dodge Ram truck and carried it down the street, he said.

Michigan defense contractor has God in its sights

WASHINGTON (AP)—Army officials said Tuesday they will investigate whether a Michigan defense contractor violated federal procurement rules by stamping references to Bible verses on combat rifle sights used by American forces to kill enemy fighters in Iraq and Afghanistan.

The Marine Corps, another major customer of the telescoping sights that allow troops to pinpoint targets day or night, says service acquisition officials plan to meet with the contractor, Trijicon of Wixom, Mich., to discuss future purchases of the company's gear.

The references have stoked concerns by a watch dog group about whether the inscriptions break a government rule that bars proselytizing by American troops. But military officials said the citations don't violate the ban and they won't stop using the tens of thousands of telescoping sights that have already been bought.

Trijicon said it has been longstanding company practice to put the Scripture citations on the equipment. Tom Munson, Trijicon's director of sales and marketing, said the company has never received any complaints until now.

"We don't publicize this," Munson said in a recent interview. "It's not something we make a big deal out of. But when asked, we say, 'Yes, it's there.'"

The inscriptions are subtle and appear in raised lettering at the end of the stock number. Trijicon's rifle sights use tritium, a radioactive form of hydrogen, to create light and help shooters hit what they're aiming for.

Markings on the Advanced Combat Optical Gunsight, which is standard issue to U.S. special operations forces, include "JN8:12," a reference to John 8:12: "Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, 'I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life,'" according to the King James version of the Bible.

Ex-mistress says TX minister admitted killing wife

WACO, Texas (AP)—The state rested its case Tuesday in the murder trial of a Texas minister whose ex-mistress testified that he drugged his wife, handcuffed her to the bed under the guise of spicing up their marriage, then smothered her with a pillow until she died.

Vanessa Bulls said Matt Baker, then a Baptist preacher, had talked about killing his wife and making it look like a suicide. His wife, Kari Baker, had previously attempted suicide, Bulls said.

Bulls said she never reported his plans or the murder to authorities because she was afraid of exposing the affair that she said began about two months before Kari Baker's 2006 death. Bulls, 27, also said she was afraid of being arrested for not stopping Baker.

Bulls was not asked directly whether she helped Baker plan or commit the crime, but at one point she said she was only guilty of not reporting it.

Bulls said she understood "what he was capable of" but tried not to think about it as she continued seeing Baker for about three months after his wife's death. She said Baker told her he would not harm her because he was happy with her.

"He was and still is a manipulative liar who took me in my vulnerable state and made me believe everything he said," said Bulls, who has been granted immunity from prosecution.

The defense was to start presenting evidence Wednesday. Baker's attorney Guy James Gray told jurors last week that Kari Baker's death, initially ruled a suicide, only became a murder case after authorities found out about the affair. Baker, who faces up to life in prison if convicted, has maintained his wife committed suicide because of severe depression.

During cross-examination, Gray asked about Bulls' interviews with several law enforcement authorities over the last four years, including some details that differed from her testimony.

ACROSS THE NATION

Police: Lone shooter kills 8 in central Virginia

APPOMATTOX, Va. (AP)—Police with dogs and heat-sensing equipment hunted for a man they say shot eight people to death Tuesday and then nearly took down a police helicopter that was trying to flush him out of the woods near this central Virginia town. State police said officers had the suspect, Christopher Speight, 39, circled in the woods late Tuesday near the home where seven of the bodies were found and they believed he was still alive. An eighth victim was found barely alive on the side of the road—which led to police being called—and died on the way to the hospital. All the victims were adults and both men and women were killed, state police Sgt. Thomas Molnar said. Three of the bodies were found inside the home, and four just outside it, Molnar said.

Witness: Former Ill. cop threatened to kill wife

JOLIET, Ill. (AP)—Former police officer Drew Peterson threw his ex-wife to the floor one night, grabbed her throat and told her he "could kill her there and then," a one-time co-worker of the woman testified Tuesday at a hearing to determine what evidence can be admitted in Peterson's murder trial. Kathleen Savio, who mysteriously drowned in a bathtub six years ago, essentially is testifying from the grave during the hearing. Witnesses are telling a judge how Savio discussed fears that Peterson, a former Bolingbrook police sergeant, would kill her. Prosecutors, meanwhile, are offering the first detailed look at evidence they contend ties Peterson to Savio's 2004 death. The hearing stems from a state law that allows a judge to admit hearsay evidence in first-degree murder cases if prosecutors can prove a defendant killed a witness to prevent him or her from testifying. The law was passed after authorities named Peterson a suspect in the October 2007 disappearance of his fourth wife, Stacy, then exhumed Savio's body and reopened her death investigation.

Alleged burglar showers, cuts hair, fries chicken

EASTON, Pa. (AP)—An eastern Pennsylvania man was charged after he allegedly broke into a home, cut his hair and prepared fried chicken before being discovered. The man was charged with breaking into the home in Easton, about 50 miles north of Philadelphia. According to court documents, the homeowner returned home Sunday to discover him watching TV and cooking chicken. Authorities said the man threw a rock through a front door window to get inside and appeared to have rummaged through every room in the house. He also took a shower. The man faces burglary, criminal trespass and other charges and was being held on $15,000 bail.

Asia

SKorean minister: Hit North first if threatened

SEOUL, South Korea (AP)—South Korea's defense chief called Wednesday for a pre-emptive strike on North Korea if there is a clear indication the country is preparing a nuclear attack.

The comments, made as the two sides held a second day of talks on further developing their joint industrial complex in the North, were likely to draw an angry reaction from Pyongyang, which recently issued its own threat to break off dialogue with Seoul and attack.

South Korea should "immediately launch a strike" on the North if there is a clear intention of a pending nuclear attack, Defense Minister Kim Tae-young said at a seminar in Seoul.

Kim made similar remarks in 2008 when he was chairman of South Korea's Joint Chiefs of Staff, prompting North Korea to threaten to destroy the South.

The North, which conducted underground nuclear tests in 2006 and 2009, claims its nuclear weapons are not for use against South Korea but are a security guarantee against what it calls U.S. hostility.

Despite the rhetoric, officials held follow-up discussions Wednesday on the industrial complex in the North Korean border city of Kaesong, according to Seoul's Unification Ministry. It did not provide further details.

The South Korean delegation was scheduled to return home later Wednesday, Unification Ministry spokesman Chun Hae-sung said. On Tuesday, the two sides met for nearly four hours to assess a joint tour of industrial parks in China and Vietnam undertaken in December.

Kaesong, which combines South Korean capital and technology with cheap North Korean labor, is the most prominent symbol of cooperation between the two countries still technically at war. About 110 South Korean factories employ some 42,000 North Korean workers.

UN: Afghans forced to pay billions in bribes

LONDON (AP)—Half of all Afghan adults paid at least one bribe to a public official over the course of a year to cut through red tape or get help with poor service, the U.N. said Tuesday in a report that documents the extraordinary depth of corruption in Afghanistan.

Afghans paid nearly $2.5 billion (euro1.7 billion) in bribes—worth almost a quarter of the country's GDP—in the 12-month period ending last autumn.

The average bribe cost $160—a hefty sum in a country with a per capita income of nearly $500, according to the report, based on interviews with thousands of people across Afghanistan.

Most of those surveyed said they could not expect a single public service without paying favors. Many felt it was "normal" to pay extra for services, better treatment or avoiding fines.

Bribes were requested and taken by politicians, prosecutors, tax officers—anyone with even the most modest level of power to yield, from the humblest clerk at the office in charge of driver's licenses to, by many accounts, the highest levels of government.

Most of the payments went to police, judges and other local officials, but Afghans were also asked to bribe teachers in public schools and doctors and nurses in government hospitals.

The report by the U.N. Office on Drugs and Crime comes as the U.S. and its partners develop plans to bolster President Hamid Karzai so he can restore public trust and turn back a resurgent Taliban. American officials have long maintained that public outrage over government corruption and inefficiency has driven many Afghans into the ranks of the insurgents.

Malaysia police arrest 8 over church arson attack

KUALA LUMPUR, Malaysia (AP)—Malaysian police Wednesday announced the arrest of eight men who allegedly attacked a Christian church with a firebomb—the first suspects in a spate of unprecedented assaults on churches that raised religious tensions in this Muslim-majority nation.

The attacks on 11 churches and a Sikh temple followed a Dec. 31 court verdict that allowed non-Muslims to use the word "Allah" to refer to God. The verdict upset many ethnic Malay Muslims who insist that letting Christians use the word could confuse some Muslims and entice them to convert.

The dispute has strained ties between Malays, who make up nearly two-thirds of Malaysia's 28 million people, and religious minorities, which often complain about what they believe is institutionalized religious discrimination.

Authorities detained eight suspects since Tuesday in connection to a Jan. 7 attack on Kuala Lumpur's Metro Tabernacle Church, which had its office gutted by fire, said Bakri Zinin, the federal police chief of criminal investigations. It was the first and most serious of all the attacks on churches.

"We believe that we solved this case," Bakri told a news conference.

ASIAN BRIEFS

Vietnam puts 4 democracy activists on trial

HO CHI MINH CITY, Vietnam (AP)—A human rights lawyer who could face the death penalty on charges of trying to overthrow Vietnam's communist government testified Wednesday that he had been swayed by Western ideas about democracy and freedom. Le Cong Dinh, one of the country's best-known lawyers, is among three defendants in the trial that opened Wednesday who could be sentenced to the firing squad for roles in creating organizations to compete with the Communist Party. The fourth defendant, who is being tried as an accomplice, could face 15 years.

16 Sri Lankans flown to Australia, New Zealand

JAKARTA, Indonesia (AP)—An Indonesian official says 16 Sri Lankan asylum seekers have left for Australia and New Zealand for resettlement. Law and human rights chief I Gde Widiarta of the western province of Riau Kepulauan said Wednesday that three people from among the group were being flown directly to Australia and 13 others would go to New Zealand via the Philippines. The group left the province's capital Tanjung Pinang on Wednesday morning. It was the last batch of 78 ethnic Tamils rescued by Australian Customs officials in October, when their overcrowded ship's engine broke down in international waters near Indonesia.

Asian businessmen urged to protect Coral Triangle

MANILA, Philippines (AP)—The planet's most diverse marine region is under serious threat and requires urgent protection from companies that can also boost their profits through conservation efforts, officials and environmentalists said Tuesday. The Coral Triangle—a 2.1 million-square-mile (5.4 million-square-kilometer) stretch of ocean straddling six countries—contains 75 percent of the world's coral species, one-third of the Earth's coral reefs, and more than 3,000 species of fish. Over-exploitation, environmental degradation, a population boom, and climate change are all threatening the area, environmentalists say, and businesses need to map out a strategy to save the Coral Triangle, which provides livelihoods for more than 120 million people.

World

Crews pull more Haiti quake survivors from ruins

PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti (AP)—A 69-year-old ardent Roman Catholic who said she prayed constantly during her week under the rubble was among the unlikely survivors of the epic Haitian earthquake.

One full week after the magnitude-7 quake killed an estimated 200,000, left 250,000 injured and made 1.5 million homeless, search-and-rescue teams were emerging from the ruins with improbable success stories. Experts have said that without water, buried quake victims were unlikely to survive beyond three days.

Ena Zizi had been at a church meeting at the residence of Haiti's Roman Catholic archbishop when the quake struck, trapping her in debris. On Tuesday, she was rescued by a Mexican disaster team that was created in the wake of Mexico City's 1985 earthquake.

Zizi said that after the quake, she spoke back and forth with a vicar who also was trapped. But after a few days, he fell silent, and she spent the rest of the time praying and waiting.

"I talked only to my boss, God," she said. "And I didn't need any more humans."

Doctors who examined Zizi on Tuesday said she was dehydrated and had a dislocated hip and a broken leg.

"I'm all right, sort of," she said, lying on a foil thermal blanket outside the Cuban hospital, her gray hair covered in white dust.

Elsewhere in the capital, two women were pulled from a destroyed university building. And near midnight Tuesday, a smiling and singing 26-year-old Lozama Hotteline was carried to safety from a collapsed store in the Petionville neighborhood by the French aid group Rescuers Without Borders.

Crews at the cathedral compound site Tuesday managed to recover the body of the archbishop, Monsignor Joseph Serge Miot, who was killed in the Jan. 12 quake.

Authorities said close to 100 people had been pulled from wrecked buildings by international search-and-rescue teams. Efforts continued, with dozens of teams sifting through Port-au-Prince's crumbled homes and buildings for signs of life.

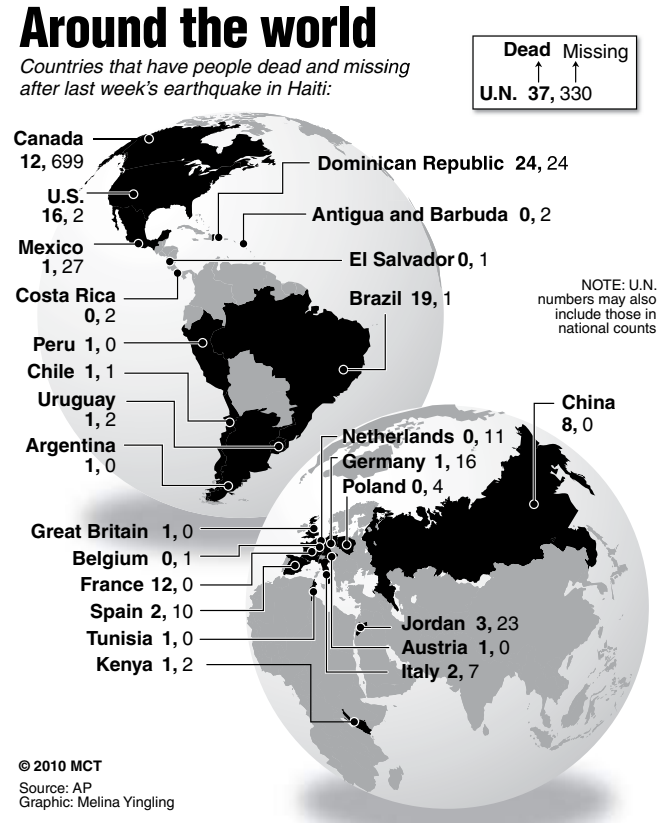
But the good news was overshadowed by the frustrating fact that the world still can't get enough food and water to the hungry and thirsty.

"We need so much. Food, clothes, we need everything. I don't know whose responsibility it is, but they need to give us something soon," said Sophia Eltime, a 29-year-old mother of two who has been living under a bedsheet with seven members of her extended family.

The World Food Program said more than 250,000 ready-to-eat food rations had been distributed in Haiti by Tuesday, reaching only a fraction of the 3 million people thought to be in desperate need. There have been anecdotal reports of starvation among the old and infirm, but apparently no widespread starvation yet.

Around the world

Countries that have people dead and missing after last week's earthquake in Haiti:



New tech tools help Haiti quake relief

By FRANK BAJAK
AP TECHNOLOGY WRITER

Hundreds of tech volunteers spurred to action by Haiti's killer quake are adding a new dimension to disaster relief, developing new tools and services for first responders and the public in an unprecedented effort.

"It really is amazing the change in the way crisis response can be done now," said Noel Dickover, a Washington, D.C.-based organizer of the CrisisCamp tech volunteer movement, which is central to the Haiti effort. "Developers, crisis mappers and even Internet-savvy folks can actually make a difference."

Volunteers have built and refined software for tracking missing people, mapping the disaster area and enabling urgent cell phone text messaging. Organizations including the International Red Cross, the United Nations, the World Bank and the U.S. Federal Emergency Management Agency have put the systems to use.

Tim Schwartz, a 28-year-old artist and programmer in San Diego, feared upon learning of the disaster that, with an array of social-networking sites active, crucial information about Haitian quake victims would "go everywhere on the Internet and it would be very hard to actually find people—and get back to their loved ones," he said. So Schwartz quickly e-mailed "all the developers I'd ever worked with."

In a few hours, he and 10 others had built http://www.haitianquake.com , an online lost-and-found to help Haitians in and out of the country locate missing relatives.

The database, which anyone can update, was online less than 24 hours after the quake struck, with more than 6,000 entries because Schwartz and his colleagues wrote an "scraper" that gathered data from a Red Cross site.

The New York Times, Miami Herald, CNN and others launched similar efforts. And two days later, Google had a similar tool running, PersonFinder, that the State Department promoted on its own Web site and Twitter. PersonFinder grew out of missing-persons technology developed after Hurricane Katrina ravaged New Orleans in 2005.

Christopher Csikszentmihalyi, director of the Center for Future Civic Media at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, advocated online for consolidating all such tools into the Google version so the information wouldn't be stuck in competing projects.

Environment

DO YOUR PART FOR THE ENVIRONMENT:

Volunteer

By TERRI BENNETT
THE CHARLOTTE OBSERVER

Volunteering is a great way for you to give back to your community while you help protect your local environment. Whether you want to take in a little nature or lend a helping hand to give used items a second life, green volunteering provides countless opportunities to Do Your Part.

Make a difference and discover the local environment when you sign up to clean up the waterways where you live. You can volunteer to pick up trash or collect data about the water quality. It's an ideal project for a group or family and you'll likely be amazed (and appalled) by the amount and type of trash that can be found in our creeks, streams, rivers and oceans.

(Editor's Note: There is a host of organizations and activities in the CNMI where you can volunteer to help out the local environment. These include Beautify CNMI!, Mariana Islands Nature Alliance, DEQ's Cleanup Brigade, PAWS, and school and community organizations.)

It's easy to generate a list of local opportunities by typing in the keyword "water" at allforgood.org. The site also has other environmentally focused volunteer opportunities and is searchable by Zip code. You can also post information about events you are organizing where volunteers are needed.

If digging in the dirt is more your style, then volunteer to plant trees. The Arbor Day Foundation has a database of volunteer opportunities listed by state at arborday.org/programs/volunteers. Planting trees can reduce storm water runoff and erosion, improving the local water quality. Trees also absorb carbon dioxide and emit oxygen, improving the local air quality.

If you prefer to do your green volunteering indoors, Habitat for Humanity ReStores are always in need of volunteers. ReStores accept donated home goods _ everything from lighting to flooring, usable furniture and even leftover materials from your home improvement projects.

There are hundreds of locations across the country and their goal is to keep working items out of the landfill and put them back to use. Habitat's Restores need volunteers to help run the stores, do repairs, or even help with their Web site. Best of all the money made through the sale of items in the ReStores stays in the community to build Habitat For Humanity Homes. And if you're looking for a good buy on home goods you need to check out your local ReStore. You can find a listing of ReStore locations at www.habitat.org/env/restores.

TERRI BENNETT/MCT
Make a difference and discover the local environment when you sign up to clean up the waterways where you live. You can volunteer to pick up trash or collect data about the water quality.

When it comes to protecting the environment, we all have a role to play. One way to Do Your Part is to seek out and participate in green volunteering opportunities in your community.

Terri Bennett is an Earth scientist, syndicated columnist and mom; www.DoYourPart.com.

'Green' hotels: Conservation vs coddling

By JULIET EILPERIN
(C) 2010, THE WASHINGTON POST

Benjamin Hale, an environmental studies and philosophy professor at the University of Colorado at Boulder, was attending the December climate talks in Copenhagen when he noticed something odd about his three-star hotel: It kept giving him fresh towels, even though he was hanging up the ones he'd used in accordance with the hotel's advertised policy of allowing guests to reuse towels as a conservation measure.

"I kept wondering, why are these towels getting washed? Because I'm trying, I'm making an effort" to reuse them, recalled Hale, who stayed at the Copenhagen Strand Hotel when delegates from 193 nations gathered in the Danish capital to debate how best to save the planet. "It's become this unfulfilled promissory note."

It's a conundrum that many travelers face nowadays: They arrive in a hotel that boasts about its environmental credentials, only to see little evidence of them during their stay. When torn between offering conservation benefits and what they consider good service, hotels usually jettison conservation.

Examples abound. The Westin Dallas Fort Worth has a double shower head in its bathrooms, along with a note stating that the secondary one is set on "off" to save water. But both shower heads immediately went full blast when one Washington-based traveler tried them out last month. The International House in New Orleans has the same towel reuse policy as the Copenhagen Strand and many other establishments, but its housekeeping staff changed a guest's towels and linens daily during a recent visit.

"Honestly, sometimes it just comes down to a training issue, which can be frustrating," said Amy Reimer, the International House's general manager. "If a room attendant sees a dirty towel, they're going to take that towel, even if the guest leaves it there. At the end of the day we strive more for service and fulfilling the service level."

For the Arp-Hansen Hotel Group, which owns the Copenhagen Strand and has met Denmark's Green Key certification for environmental practices, enforcing this policy across 10 hotels with 2,253 rooms poses a challenge. "We are trying our best to stick to these rules," said Malene Friis, the group's chief operating officer, who added that the company hires outside cleaning contractors during crunch times, such as last month, when the demand for guest rooms was unusually high.

The fact that hotel managers are even worrying about such questions as when to wash towels or whether to place recycling bins in guests' rooms shows how environmentalism has begun to penetrate the hospitality industry. But the hiccups along the road show that green aspirations sometimes clash with popular conceptions of a high-class getaway, and that the same guests who want to patronize environmentally friendly establishments are often unwilling to pay extra for the greenness.

According to a quarterly consumer survey released in August by the U.S. Travel Association and Ypartnership, a travel marketing outfit, travelers have become much more familiar with sustainability lingo over the past couple of years. Just 12 percent knew the term

"carbon footprint" in July 2007, while 54 percent recognized it two years later. During the same period, the percentage of travelers aware of the phrase "green travel" more than tripled.

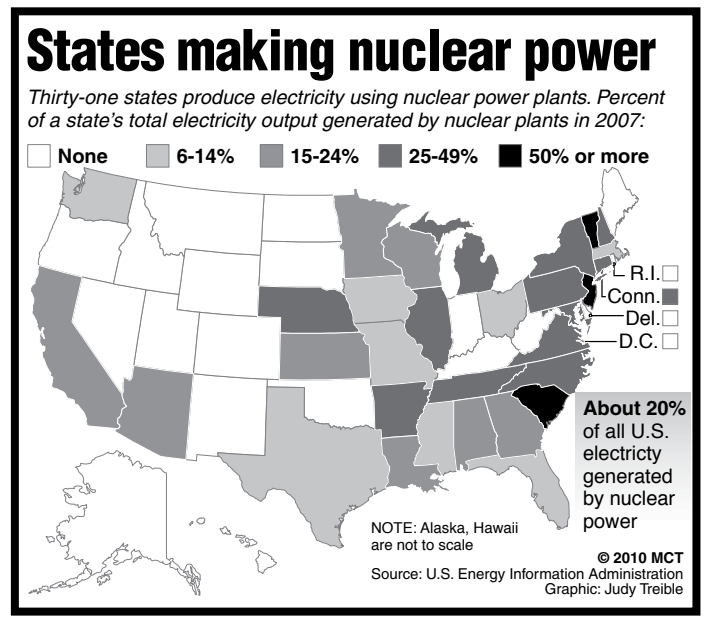
Despite that, however, just 9 percent of the consumers polled said that they would pay more to use travel service suppliers who offer eco-friendly options for travelers, and 3 percent had paid to offset the carbon emissions they generated by traveling when booking trips. As Roger Dow, the U.S. Travel Association's president and chief executive, put it, "Consumers are looking for green travel choices at the right price."

And as the manager of one boutique hotel who asked not to be identified said of green policies, "It's peer pressure, and we have to do it."

As a result, hotels often adopt approaches that cut costs or are relatively unobtrusive. Among the big hotel chains, Marriott International has adopted one of the most comprehensive green policies, which it developed in consultation with the environmental group Conservation International. Its strategy includes reducing waste, cutting water and energy consumption, buying more-sustainable supplies, urging workers and guests to engage in conservation and promoting construction of greener hotels.

Marriott spokeswoman Stephanie Hampton noted that because the company does not own its hotel buildings, it's important that the people who do own the physical properties "see value in everything. They're not going to want to do anything that's going to cost more."

But the company has been able to combine conservation with savings, often through its supply chain. It got Standard Textile to produce towels for its North American hotels that don't need to be pre-washed, saving six million gallons of water. The 47 million Bic pens it buys for guest and meeting rooms in the same hotels are made of 75 percent recycled material. And it has developed an energy-efficient blueprint for its Courtyard hotels that any owner can use when constructing a new building.


States making nuclear power
Thirty-one states produce electricity using nuclear power plants. Percent of a state's total electricity output generated by nuclear plants in 2007:
None
6-14%
15-24%
25-49%
50% or more
R.I.
Conn.
Del.
D.C.
About 20% of all U.S. electricty generated by nuclear power
NOTE: Alaska, Hawaii are not to scale
© 2010 MCT
Source: U.S. Energy Information Administration
Graphic: Judy Treible

Justin Ward, Conservation International's vice president for business practices, helped advise Marriott on its green strategy. "The goal all along was to come up with meaningful and strong environmental performance targets that did not provide tradeoffs with what Marriott, or any hotel, for that matter, would provide their customers with in terms of the level of service or value they've come to expect," he said.

In many cases, hotels that deliver on their green pledges are the ones that have incorporated environmental planning into every aspect of their business strategy.

Seattle's Hotel 1000, for example, has a heating and cooling system that ramps up shortly before a visitor is ready to check in and operates at full force only when guests are in their rooms. Hotel manager Matt Hagerman said having "the green mindset" is "the least flashy and the most important piece" of incorporating environmental standards into everyday operations.

"When it comes down to the housekeeping meeting, is that part of the conversation or not?" Hagerman asked. "The real heavy lifting is in behavior, what do people really do."

International House in New Orleans goes to the trouble of pouring out unused shampoo, soap and lotion, sorting the bottles and sending everything to the nonprofit Clean the World, which then distributes the recycled cleansers and bottles to shelters in the United States and to children in poor countries overseas. The Pan Pacific Hotel Seattle also donates partially used amenities to a local women's shelter.

The International House's Reimer said that her hotel opted for the more expensive charitable route instead of installing bulk shampoo and soap dispensers of the sort used elsewhere. "In a four-star hotel, it just looks too motel-ish," she said.

Life & Style

Nevermore? Mystery visitor to Poe's grave is a no-show

AP

Cynthia Pelayo, of Chicago, leaves roses and cognac at the burial site of Edgar Allen Poe Tuesday, Jan. 19, 2010 in Baltimore.

BALTIMORE (AP)—It is what Edgar Allan Poe might have called "a mystery all insoluble": Every year for the past six decades, a shadowy visitor would leave roses and a half-empty bottle of cognac on Poe's grave on the anniversary of the writer's birth. This year, no one showed.

Did the mysterious "Poe toaster" meet his own mortal end? Did some kind of ghastly misfortune befall him? Will he be heard from nevermore?

"I'm confused, befuddled," said Jeff Jerome, curator of the Poe House and Museum. "I don't know what's going on."

The visitor's absence this year only deepened the mystery over his identity. One name mentioned as a possibility was that of a Baltimore poet and known prankster who died in his 60s last week. But there is little or no evidence to suggest he was the man.

Poe was the American literary master of the macabre, known for poems such as "The Raven" and grisly short stories like "The Tell-Tale Heart," "The Fall of the House of Usher" and "The Pit and the Pendulum." He is also credited with writing the first modern detective story, "The Murders in the Rue Morgue." He died in 1849 in Baltimore at age 40 after collapsing in a tavern.

In the history of the Poe toaster, little is certain.

The annual tribute began in 1949—unless it started earlier, or later. The first printed reference to the tribute can be found that year in The Evening Sun of Baltimore. The newspaper mentioned "an anonymous citizen who creeps in annually to place an empty bottle (of excellent label)" against the gravestone.

Every year since 1978, Jerome has staked out the grave at the Westminster Hall and Burying Ground. Year after year, he said, he and various friends and Poe enthusiasts would watch from inside the Presbyterian church as a figure dressed in black, with a wide-brimmed hat and a white scarf, would leave three roses and cognac and steal away.

There is an alternative tale of the toaster's origins, one that Jerome vehemently disputes. Sam Porpora, the former historian at Westminster Hall, claimed in 2007 that he was the original Poe toaster, saying he came up with the idea in the late 1960s as a publicity stunt. But the details of Porpora's story seemed to change with each telling, and he acknowledged that someone had since made the tradition his own.

In 1993, the visitor began leaving notes, starting with one that read: "The torch will be passed." A note in 1998 indicated the originator of the tradition had died and passed it on to his two sons.

In 2001, as the Baltimore Ravens—named in honor of the bird in Poe's most famous poem—were preparing to face the New York Giants in the Super Bowl, the toaster left a note that praised the Giants and said the Ravens would suffer "a thousand injuries." Then in 2004, amid tense relations between the United States and France over the invasion of Iraq, a note said Poe's grave was "no place for French cognac" and that the liquor was being left "with great reluctance."

Beyond Porpora, no one ever stepped forward to take credit for the tradition. But one name emerged Tuesday as a possible candidate: David Franks, a Baltimore poet and performance artist who died last week.

Franks was a Poe aficionado and an outrageous prankster who dressed with a "19th-century literary flair," said Rafael Alvarez, a friend of Franks and president of the Edgar Allan Poe Society of Baltimore.

Franks once photocopied his private parts on a Xerox machine at a Social Security office and put the images on display. Decades ago, he posed as a disabled poet in a wheelchair, solicited donations from the crowd, then thanked everyone and got up and walked away.

Jerome said he doubts Franks was the toaster: "I looked at some images of him, and he doesn't look at all like the person we've seen over the years."

Alvarez also said Franks wasn't a sports fan, and "his politics were more French than American."

The toaster's annual appearance has become a pilgrimage for Poe fans, some of whom travel hundreds of miles. About three dozen stood huddled in blankets during the overnight cold Tuesday, hoping to catch a glimpse. At 5:30 a.m., Jerome emerged from the church to announce that the toaster had not arrived.

As the longtime guardian of Poe's legacy in Baltimore and the occupant of a prime viewing spot, Jerome has often had to respond to skeptics who believe he knows the Poe toaster's true identity—or is the toaster himself.

"If I was doing it, that is fraud, pure and simple. I could lose my job," Jerome said.

Jerome said the only thing he has kept secret is a signal—a gesture the toaster has predictably made each year at the grave—that even now he is not willing to reveal.

As for why the visitor didn't show this year, "you've got so many possibilities," Jerome said. "The guy had the flu, accident, too many people."

Jerome said that perhaps the visitor considered last year's elaborate 200th anniversary celebration of Poe's birth an appropriate stopping point.

"People will be asking me, 'Why do you think he stopped?'" Jerome said. "Or did he stop? We don't know if he stopped. He just didn't come this year."

'Love Story' author Erich Segal dies aged 72

LONDON (AP)—Erich Segal, the Ivy League professor who attained mainstream fame and made millions sob as writer of the novel and movie "Love Story," has died of a heart attack, his daughter said Tuesday. He was 72.

Francesca Segal said her father died Sunday at his home in London. She said he had suffered from Parkinson's disease -a neurological condition that affects movement—for 25 years. His funeral was held in London on Tuesday, she said.

Segal was a Yale classics professor and screenplay writer when he turned a proposed movie about two college students—preppy Oliver and smart-mouthed Jenny—into a novel. Published in 1970, "Love Story" was a weeper about a young couple who fall in love, marry and discover she is dying of cancer. It was a million seller guaranteed to make readers cry and critics scream.

A much bigger audience caught up with the film version, which starred Ryan O'Neal and Ali MacGraw. Directed by Arthur Hiller, with a plaintive, Henry Mancini-composed theme song that wouldn't quit, "Love Story" gained seven Oscar nominations—including one for Segal for writing the screenplay, as well as for best picture, best director and best actor and actress. It won one Oscar, for best music.

Segal also wrote a sequel, "Oliver's Story," published in 1977, and made into a film, with O'Neal again in the lead male role. Segal would later say that Oliver was based in part on a couple of Harvard undergraduates who later became quite well known: Al Gore and Tommy Lee Jones. (He disputed reports that Jenny was based on Gore's future wife, Tipper).

He was adored, and mocked. The famous "Love Story" line—"Love means never having to say you're sorry"—became a national catchphrase, but provided endless fodder for jokes. John Lennon countered that "Love means having to say you're sorry every 15 minutes."

Even O'Neal parodied his earlier role. In the comedy "What's Up Doc?", he responded to the famous line with the riposte, "That's the dumbest thing I ever heard."

A rabbi's son, born in New York City in 1937, Segal also had a long, distinguished academic career in classics, gaining a doctorate at Harvard and teaching at Yale, Princeton and Dartmouth while writing era-defining screenplays and novels. He worked on surreal popular works like the 1968 screenplay to the animated Beatles film "Yellow Submarine" while also publishing works on Greek tragedy, Latin poetry and ancient athletics.

At his funeral, his daughter Francesca spoke of the knowledge that had been destroyed by Parkinson's disease.

"In (Tom) Stoppard's Arcadia, Thomasina mourns the burning of the library of Alexandria and the losses of Aeschylus, Sophocles and Euripides—all of Aristotle's own library destroyed. And the image has for years made me think of my father, all his erudition and knowledge and wit and puns and stuff consumed in the flames of neurological disease," she said in a eulogy she delivered at his funeral and later e-mailed to the AP.

In the eulogy, she added: "That he fought to breathe, fought to live, every second of the last 30 years of illness with such mind-blowing obduracy, is a testament to the core of who he was—a blind obsessionality that saw him pursue his teaching, his writing, his running and my mother, with just the same tenacity. He was the most dogged man any of us will ever know."

Segal was an honorary fellow of Wolfson College at Oxford University.

He is survived by his wife, Karen James, and daughters Francesca, 29, and Miranda, 20.

AP

In this Oct. 13, 1980 file photo Erich Segal, professor for literature and author of the the best-selling fiction "Love Story" speaks during a news conference at the book fair in Frankfurt am Main, West Germany.

Police: Opera star's stolen antiques auctioned off

ALAMEDA, California (AP)—Police are investigating the theft of a Grammy-nominated opera singer's family heirlooms that they say were stolen and sold at a Northern California auction house.

Alameda police Detective Craig Vreeland says singer Frederica von Stade is trying to recover more than $50,000 worth of antique china, wall sconces and other items sold at Michaan's Auctions.

Vreeland says von Stade's family discovered the property missing from an Alameda storage unit in October. The family learned the items ended up at the Alameda-based auction house after contacting area businesses specializing in antiques and collectibles.

Police say they arrested 47-year-old Kelly Lee Baslee on suspicion of possessing stolen property after she showed up at the auction house to try to sell more items. She has denied wrongdoing.

Police say Michaan's is working with the family to help recover the stolen items.

Brittany's mom, husband say drugs didn't kill her

LOS ANGELES (AP)—A month after her sudden death, Brittany Murphy's mother and husband say they are convinced the actress died of natural causes, not drugs or an eating disorder.

In an interview with The Associated Press on Tuesday, Sharon Murphy and Simon Monjack said that Murphy did not use drugs or alcohol and that they are awaiting a determination from coroner's officials that will end speculation prescription medicine caused Murphy's death on Dec. 20 at age 32.

Monjack said some of the prescription medications found in the couple's Hollywood Hills home belonged to him.

Murphy had mitral valve prolapse, a common condition where a heart valve does not properly close, but doctors said the actress "would live a long and healthy life," Monjack said.

"She had a fear of dying," Sharon Murphy said. "She would not take too much caffeine. She wouldn't even have a glass of champagne on New Year's. She was just high on life, and people see that as something else I guess.

Murphy, the star of varied films such as "Clueless," "8 Mile," "Sin City" and the television series "King of the Hill," was buried in a private funeral on Christmas Eve. At the service, Monjack told mourners that the actress was his best friend and soul mate, sentiments he repeated during the Tuesday interview.

Monjack, who married Murphy in 2007, said police and coroner's officials have not contacted the family to say his wife's death was from anything other than natural causes.

Authorities continue to investigate her death but do not suspect foul play. An autopsy was inconclusive and coroner's officials are awaiting the results of toxicology and tissue tests before determining what killed the actress.

Assistant Chief Coroner Ed Winter said Tuesday that he had not seen Murphy's autopsy report, but the condition of her heart would be looked at before her cause of death is determined.

Sharon Murphy described the wait for answers as torture. "We wish we knew," she said.

"She was alive one minute and she was dead the next," Monjack said.

The pair worked frantically to save Murphy's life the morning she died, as revealed in a heart-wrenching 911 call where Sharon Murphy implores, "Brittany, please come back!" as Monjack performs CPR.

Sharon Murphy said she has largely ignored tabloid reports that have suggested her daughter abused drugs or had an eating disorder. She said her daughter had always been petite and ate often, but burned it off with an active lifestyle.

Monjack, who has read some of the reports, called them lies based on anonymous sources who weren't close to Brittany Murphy or him. He said he is considering suing some British outlets for "outright fabrications."

He said the rumors of her drug use were unfounded and had cost his wife roles in some major films.

He said he is also considering whether to sue the Los Angeles County Coroner's Department over an initial report that was obtained by celebrity Web site TMZ.com, which listed several prescription medications found in Murphy's home. Monjack said most of the medicines listed in the report were his.

He said his wife took the anti-seizure medication klonopin ever since an episode she had while filming "8 Mile." She also occasionally took Sarafem, a drug aimed at pain and mood swings during menstrual periods, Monjack said.

Klonopin has been cited in several celebrity overdose deaths, but with many other medications mixed in.

He said he did not think a harmful interaction of drugs played a role in his wife's death. She had been sick with flu-like symptoms in the days before her death and had been taking Robitussin, but nothing more, he said.

Monjack and Sharon Murphy remain in the Hollywood Hills home where Brittany Murphy collapsed a month ago. Several framed photographic portraits of the actress that Monjack shot adorn the walls and other areas of the living room.

"I'm comforted by these photographs," Monjack said. "I'm comforted by the transformation from girl to woman that I witnessed."

The couple planned to display for exhibition some of the photographs, which can be seen at http://www.simonmonjackphotography.com .

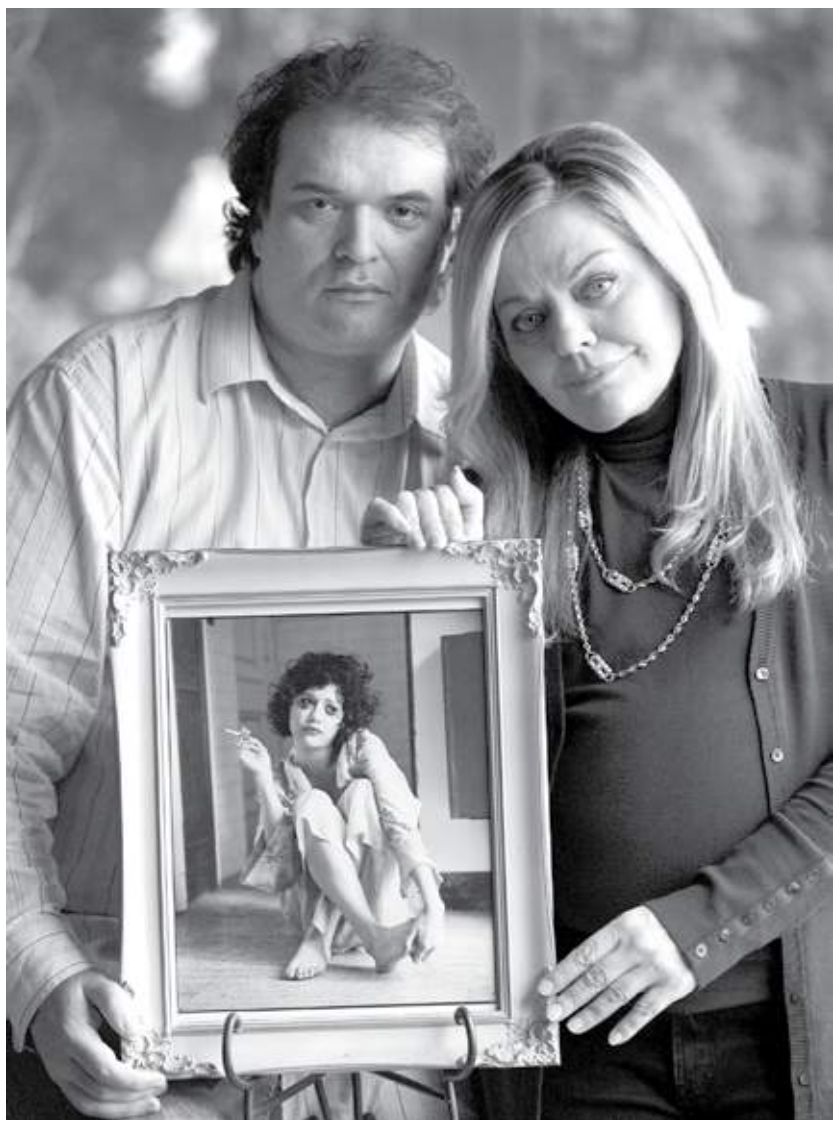
It was just one of the couple's plans, which included starting a family and moving to New York. Sharon Murphy said her daughter was talking about having a child the night before she died. Monjack said they already had baby names picked out.

Now the pair are planning a public memorial to celebrate Brittany Murphy's life, which will be held in the Los Angeles area at the end of February. Monjack and Sharon Murphy said they have asked many of the actress' friends to refrain from making public comments, but that they expect the memorial will remind people of her talents and beauty.

Monjack said the memorial will coincide with the launch of the Brittany Murphy Foundation, a charitable group that he said will support arts education for children and other causes his wife believed in.

Both Monjack and Sharon Murphy said they expect respect to grow for Brittany Murphy's work and life, once questions about her death are settled. The actress had completed two unreleased films before her death but their prospects are uncertain.

Sharon Murphy expressed reluctance about their release because of the filmmakers' inexperience, but Monjack said he would approve if the releases were respectfully done and the profits donated to the Brittany Murphy Foundation.



AP

Simon Monjack, left, husband of deceased actress Brittany Murphy and Murphy's mother Sharon pose with a portrait of the actress in Los Angeles, Tuesday, Jan. 19, 2010.

Susan Boyle snubbed, gets no Brit Award nomination

LONDON (AP)—Women are dominating the nominations for Britain's leading music awards—the Brits—but Internet sensation Susan Boyle was snubbed on the shortlist.

Quirky chanteuses Florence and the Machine, Pixie Lott, Lily Allen and Lady GaGa all have three nominations.

Other British contenders include boy band JLS, Leona Lewis, Bat for Lashes, Paolo Nuttini and Dizzee Rascal.

Nominees in the international categories include Bruce Springsteen, Eminem, Jay-Z, Michael Buble and Shakira.

Boyle

Robbie Williams will receive an award for outstanding contribution to music at the Feb. 16 ceremony in London.

The awards are the British equivalent of the Grammys. Most winners are selected by a vote of over 1,000 industry members.

Michelle Obama figure shown at London wax museum

AP

A waxwork of U.S. First Lady Michelle Obama joins that of her husband U.S. President Barack Obama, marking the first anniversary of his inauguration as U.S. President, at Madame Tussauds in London, Tuesday, Jan 19, 2010.

LONDON (AP)—A wax figure of Michelle Obama standing in the Oval Office has been unveiled at Madame Tussauds' London museum to mark the first anniversary of the inauguration of her husband, President Barack Obama.

The figure of the stylish first lady wearing a sleeveless purple dress and black sweater has been placed next to one of her husband in a recreation of the Oval Office.

Spokeswoman Liz Edwards says the figure of the U.S. president has been extremely popular and she expects the figure of the first lady to be a crowd pleaser as well.

The figure of Michelle Obama will be on display until mid-April when it will be moved to its permanent base at the Madame Tussauds museum in Bangkok, Thailand.

Source: O'Brien's staff is sticking point in talks

O'Brien

LOS ANGELES (AP)—The sticking point in Conan O'Brien's complex exit negotiations with NBC involves his TV staff, not Triumph, the Insult Comic Dog, a person familiar with the talks said Tuesday.

Although discussions also focused on whether NBC would keep the rights to familiar O'Brien comedy bits including Triumph, O'Brien's focus was ensuring severance deals for his "Tonight" staff and crew, the person said, speaking on condition of anonymity because the talks were intended to be private.

O'Brien is "dug in on that," the person said.

NBC fired back in a statement, saying "it was Conan's decision to leave NBC that resulted in nearly 200 of his staffers being out of work."

"We have already agreed to pay millions of dollars to compensate every one of them. This latest posturing is nothing more than a PR ploy," the network said.

A spokesman for O'Brien declined to comment.

So far, negotiations have yielded a proposed deal that could pay O'Brien more than $30 million for leaving NBC and "The Tonight Show," allowing Jay Leno to return to late night from his soon-to-be canceled 10 p.m. EST show.

The proposal also would allow O'Brien, who would exit "Tonight" less than a year after taking over from Leno, to start work on a competing network as early as fall. But he would be barred from making NBC the butt of jokes.

O'Brien asked to be released from his contract, which has about two-and-a-half years left, after rejecting NBC's plan to push him and "Tonight" to 12:05 a.m. EST to make way for a half-hour show with Leno at 11:35 p.m.

The network, hit by poor ratings for its prime-time experiment, "The Jay Leno Show," and for O'Brien's "Tonight," was trying to keep both comedians on board.

O'Brien has seen his viewership jump in recent days. His Monday night Nielsen Co. rating, according to preliminary figures, was up 67 percent in total viewers over the previous fourth quarter average and up 80 percent among advertiser-favored young adults.

Ratings for Leno in the same window, however, remained flat.

The dispute has repeatedly spilled on-air, with jokes aplenty made about it by Leno, O'Brien and hosts at other networks. CBS' David Letterman, who has taken shots at NBC and Leno, his one-time competitor for "Tonight," drew a rebuke for his quips from NBC sports chief Dick Ebersol.

That made for more Letterman fun Monday on his "Late Show."

Jackson wants 'Idol' focus on talent, not judges

NEW YORK (AP)—It seems as if all the buzz about "American Idol" has been on the status of the judges and not the talent, and Randy Jackson says that needs to change.

"A lot is being made about us and what we do, how we judge, who's on, who's not on, what's happening, all of that," he said in an interview Tuesday.

"It's really about those contestants, really. They're going to go on because it's them taking the rocket ship to try and get their fame started ... I mean, so much is being made about us or whatever."

That's because the changing faces of the judges have provided the biggest news.

Simon Cowell recently announced he's leaving "Idol" for the U.K.-based competition series, "The X Factor," and Paula Abdul left after her contract deal fell through.

Jackson, along with Kara DioGuardi, Cowell and various guest judges, kicked off the ninth season of "Idol" last week. Ellen DeGeneres will begin her stint on Feb. 9, when the contestants who received the golden ticket compete in Hollywood.

Jackson, 53, laughs when he's asked about the length of his contract with the Fox Television series: "It's got some time left, yes," he acknowledges.

And ask him if he would work as a judge on "The X Factor" and he'll laugh again.

"You never know what's going to happen, you just never know in life," he added.

He says finding a judge to replace Cowell will be "tough" and "really difficult" because "there's nobody quite like him."

He later jokes about Cowell's possible replacements. "Maybe Conan? Maybe Leno? I don't know," he said.

Throughout the season nine auditions, Jackson says the girls outshine the boys—and he's hoping a female takes the top prize.

"In my mind, the biggest winners ever on 'American Idol' have been girls. I mean that have gone on to huge success with Carrie Underwood, with Kelly Clarkson, these are your big, huge, giant success stories," he said.

"We had two years of boys," he said of season seven and eight champions, David Cook and Kris Allen, respectively. "C'mon, we need a girl!"

Jackson may be rooting for the ladies, but there's one male contestant that he—nor America—can't get enough of.

"General" Larry Platt, the 63-year-old civil rights veteran who auditioned in Atlanta, has become an Internet sensation with his original song, "Pants On the Ground."

"I'm so happy he's getting his day and his moment and I even like the message in his mind, his wisdom, that he's trying to impart on the young hip-hop community," Jackson said.

The next question is whether "Pants On the Ground" could top the charts? Jackson thinks so.

"Dude, let's go. Let's get the remix, man! What? Give me Jay-Z, put Jay-Z on it," Jackson said laughing.

In this Oct. 13, 2009 file photo, music producer and television personality Randy Jackson makes an appearance at the Yahoo Yodel Studio in Times Square in New York.

AP

Aloha, matey! 4th 'Pirates' to be filmed in Hawaii

HONOLULU (AP)—Aloha, Captain Jack.

The fourth installment of Disney's popular "Pirates of the Caribbean" series will be filmed in Hawaii, according an announcement Monday by Gov. Linda Lingle.

Johnny Depp will return to his role as Captain Jack Sparrow in "Pirates of the Caribbean: On Stranger Tides," which will begin shooting this summer on Oahu and Kauai and be released in 2011. The film is produced by Jerry Bruckheimer and directed by Rob Marshall.

"We've always sought out the most extraordinary and exotic locations ... Hawaii provides an amazing range of both land and seascapes, and we're delighted to return for 'On Stranger Tides,'" Bruckheimer said in a statement.

Small portions of "Pirates of the Caribbean: At World's End," were shot on Maui and Molokai.

Lingle estimated the production will generate $85 million in spending in Hawaii, which is reeling from the steep drop-off in tourism stemming from the global economic crisis.

AP

Johnny Depp accepts the award for favorite movie actor of the decade at the People's Choice Awards on Wednesday Jan. 6, 2010, in Los Angeles.

"Hawaii competes on a global basis for productions and to have Disney choose Hawaii over other states and countries is a huge win for us," said Georja Skinner, which heads the state division that oversees the Hawaii Film Office.

Skinner said what made the difference was the combination of Hawaii's tax incentive, as well as support from the film and travel industries.

Lingle lauded Hawaii's relationship with The Walt Disney Co., saying it was a "testament to the company's confidence in our state as a great place to do business." Other Disney-involved projects in Hawaii include a new hotel-timeshare resort "Aulani" to open in 2011 and ABC's castaway drama "Lost," which has filmed in Hawaii for several years and is currently shooting its final season. ABC is owned by Disney.

"The Walt Disney Company has a great relationship with Hawaii that we're looking forward to building upon with the filming of the latest adventures of Captain Jack Sparrow and his crew," Disney President and CEO Bob Iger said.

"Pirates" is the latest of three big-budget films being shot in the islands this year. "Hereafter," directed by Clint Eastwood and starring Matt Damon, wrapped up shooting on Maui last week. Pre-production has begun for "The Descendants," starring George Clooney, with filming scheduled to begin in March.

China to pull 2D version of 'Avatar'

BEIJING (AP)—Chinese censors have ordered the 2D version of "Avatar" pulled from screens across the country, apparently to reduce competition for the homegrown film industry ahead of the nation's biggest holiday season.

The 3D and IMAX versions of James Cameron's global hit will continue their run into February. But Saturday marks the end of 2D screenings of the science fiction epic, which also dramatizes the forced eviction of a people—a politically sensitive subject in China.

China Film Group, the state-run domestic distributor of the Hollywood blockbuster, has ordered the move after receiving instructions from China's censors. Repeated calls to the distributor's spokesman Tuesday went unanswered.

Reportedly, part of the reason is to reduce competition for China's homegrown films, like the state-backed biopic of Confucius, the ancient Chinese philosopher, starring Hong Kong superstar Chow Yun-fat, which opens this Thursday.

The Beijing Youth Daily on Tuesday quoted UME International Cineplex assistant manager Liu Hui confirming the pullout at theaters in the capital. She said it won't affect the cinema's revenues.

"In UME, the 3D and Imax version make up 90 percent of our box-office income, so it won't affect the majority of viewers. With the pullout of the 2D version, movies like Confucius will gain some room for showing," she said.

Next month is Lunar New Year, the nation's biggest holiday. With a week of vacation or more, many Chinese are expected to flock to the country's theaters. China boasts about a dozen IMAX screens, another 800 3D screens and an estimated 4,500 regular screens. It's unclear how many 2D screens Avatar was playing on.

China remains highly protective of its domestic film industry, allowing only 20 foreign films into the Chinese market each year. Cameron, who visited Beijing in December as part of "Avatar's" press tour, had called on China to end that restriction, which is also being challenged by the World Trade Organization.

There is also sensitivity to the movie's plot, which revolves around the forced evictions of the alien Na'vi race by humans—a story line that some have said draws unflattering comparisons to China's own, often brutal removal of millions of residents to make way for property developers.

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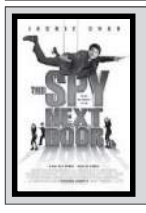
The Book of Eli

Friday		4:20	7:10	9:40
Saturday & Sunday	1:30	4:20	7:10	9:40
Monday	1:30	4:20	7:10	
Tues thru Thurs		4:20	7:10	

Denzel Washington, Gary Oldman
Action • Rated R T

Synopsis
In a post-apocalyptic America where the once-picturesque countryside has become a desolate and violent wasteland, one man (Denzel Washington) fights to protect that sacred tome that could hold the key to the survival of the human race in this futuristic thriller from filmmaking duo Albert and Allen Hughes (From Hell and Dead Presidents). Gary Oldman, Mila Kunis, and Ray Stevenson co-star in the Warner Bros. production.



The Spy Next Door

Friday		4:30	7:20	9:35
Saturday & Sunday	1:10	4:30	7:20	9:35
Monday	1:10	4:30	7:20	
Tues thru Thurs		4:30	7:20	

Jackie Chan, George Lopez
Comedy • Rated PG T

Synopsis
A man (Jackie Chan) is forced to defend some neighborhood children who have been put in his care against secret agents looking for a stolen secret code in this Relativity Media family action film. Are We There Yet's helmer Brian Levant directs from a script by Jonathan Bernstein and Jim Greer.

★ ★ ★

Daybreakers

Friday		4:10	7:30	9:50
Saturday & Sunday	1:20	4:10	7:30	9:50
Monday	1:20	4:10	7:30	
Tues thru Thurs		4:10	7:30	

Ethan Hawke, William Dafoe
Horror • Rated R T

Synopsis
Fresh off the success of their inventive take on the zombie genre, Undead masterminds Michael and Peter Spierig direct Ethan Hawke in an ambitious tale of a futuristic Earth populated entirely by vampires, and the efforts made by the creatures to ensure that their food supply doesn't run out as humankind is faced with extinction. The year is 2017, and a vampire plague has turned most of the planet's human population into bloodsucking ghouls.

Youth in Revolt

Friday		4:00	7:00	9:45
Saturday & Sunday	1:00	4:00	7:00	9:45
Monday	1:00	4:00	7:00	
Tues thru Thurs		4:00	7:00	

M. Emmet Walsh, Fred Willard
Comedy • Rated R T

Sherlock Holmes

Friday		4:05	7:05	9:55
Saturday & Sunday	1:05	4:05	7:05	9:55
Monday	1:05	4:05	7:05	
Tues thru Thurs		4:05	7:05	

Robert Downey, Jr., Jude Law
Action, Mystery • Rated PG 13 T

Alvin & The Chipmunks: The Sqeakquel

Friday		4:15	7:25	9:30
Saturday & Sunday	1:15	4:15	7:25	9:30
Monday	1:15	4:15	7:25	
Tues thru Thurs		4:15	7:25	

Justin Long, Matthew Gray Gubler
Children, Family • Rated PG T

Avatar

Friday		3:55	6:55	10:00
Saturday & Sunday	12:50	3:55	6:55	10:00
Monday	12:50	3:55	6:55	
Tues thru Thurs		3:55	6:55	

Sam Worthington, Zoe Saldana
Science Fiction • Rated PG 13 T

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Marc Webb to direct next 'Spider-Man'

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Marc Webb has caught the job of "Spider-Man" director.

Sony Pictures and Marvel Studios announced Tuesday that the "(500) Days of Summer" director will helm the next "Spider-Man" film following the departure of Sam Raimi and Tobey Maguire, the director and star who worked on the previous three Spidey films. The fourth installment is set for a 2012 release and will focus on a younger version of the superhero.

Webb said in a statement he was not taking over the series from Raimi but instead wanted the "opportunity for ideas, stories and histories that will add a new dimension, canvas and creative voice to 'Spider-Man.'" Webb previously directed music videos, including Green Day's "21 Guns" and The All-American Rejects' "Move Along."

Dennis Hopper, battling cancer, files for divorce

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Dennis Hopper, battling prostate cancer, wants out of his marriage.

The 73-year-old actor-director filed for divorce Thursday in Los Angeles, citing irreconcilable differences with Victoria Duffy, his wife of nearly 14 years.

Hopper has been battling prostate cancer and in October canceled all travel plans to focus on treatment.

Hopper is seeking joint custody of the couple's 6-year-old daughter and offering to pay spousal support to Duffy.

The "Easy Rider" star last year finished shooting the second season of "Crash," a TV version of the Oscar-winning 2004 film that airs on the Starz cable network. Hopper also has several film projects in the works.

Phone and e-mail messages left for Hopper's manager, Sam Maydew, have not been returned.

In this Oct. 13, 2008 file photo, actor Dennis Hopper, right, and his wife, Victoria Duffy, are shown after Hopper was awarded the "Commander in France's National Order Of Arts and Letters" in Paris.
AP

Sheen's Colo. court hearing postponed until Friday

ASPEN, Colo. (AP)—A hearing to determine whether to modify a court order preventing Charlie Sheen and his wife, Brooke, from contacting each other was postponed until Friday because Brooke Sheen underwent surgery for an oral infection.

Brooke Sheen's attorney, Yale Galanter, asked the court to allow his client to participate in Wednesday's scheduled hearing by telephone, citing Tuesday's surgery. Pitkin County District Court Judge James Boyd denied the motion but did reschedule the hearing for 10 a.m. Friday.

Police in this ski resort town about 200 miles west of Denver arrested Charlie Sheen on Dec. 25 on suspicion of felony menacing, second-degree assault and criminal mischief.

A police officer's arrest affidavit quoted Brooke Sheen as saying the actor had pinned her on a bed while holding a knife to her throat and telling her that she "better be in fear." The officer said Brooke Sheen reported her husband also told her that he could hire ex-police "who know how to get the job done and they won't leave any trace."

Charlie Sheen denies threatening his wife. His initial court appearance on the charges is scheduled for Feb. 8.

Both Sheen and his wife are expected to ask Boyd on Friday to throw out or revise a protection order that prevents the couple from contacting each other. Prosecutors have opposed the request.

Sheen was preparing to leave Los Angeles for Aspen for Wednesday's hearing when he learned it was postponed, said his agent, Stan Rosenfield. He intends to appear on Friday, Rosenfield said.

Galanter said Brooke Sheen, currently at her home in Los Angeles, also intends to be in Aspen for Friday's hearing.

Charlie Sheen, 44, stars in the CBS comedy "Two and a Half Men."

Springsteen, Jay-Z, Urban join Haiti telethon

NEW YORK (AP)—The music world's top stars are signing on for Friday's "Hope for Haiti" telethon.

Bruce Springsteen, Jay-Z, Taylor Swift, Justin Timberlake, Keith Urban and Alicia Keys are just a few of the performers who will be featured, according to MTV Networks, an integral partner in the two-hour event.

Haiti was devastated and thousands of its citizens killed when an earthquake hit the Caribbean nation last week.

"Hope For Haiti Now: A Global Benefit for Earthquake Relief" will be an international event. Haitian native Wyclef Jean will anchor the show from New York, while George Clooney will do so from Los Angeles. CNN's Anderson Cooper will report from Haiti.

London has also been added to the lineup, and that's where Jay-Z will perform, along with Bono, The Edge and Rihanna in a special joint performance. Coldplay is also to perform from London.

In New York, Springsteen will perform, along with Jennifer Hudson, Mary J. Blige, Shakira, Jean and Sting. In Los Angeles, Swift is to perform, and Urban, Kid Rock and Sheryl Crow plan a collaboration. Also performing in Los Angeles is Timberlake, Dave Matthews, John Legend, and Stevie Wonder.

People can purchase the night's performances for 99 cents each through iTunes starting Saturday. A statement released Tuesday says all proceeds will go to Haiti relief.

The "Hope for Haiti" benefit will be broadcast from New York, Los Angeles, London and Haiti. It will be televised on all the major networks at 8 p.m. EST, as well as MTV, VH1, CMT, BET, PBS, CNN, Bravo, and a host of other networks. In addition, the telethon will be streamed live on Web sites including YouTube, MySpace and AOL.

The funds raised from the telethon will be donated to several relief organizations, including UNICEF, Oxfam America and Partners in Health.

In this July 31, 2009 file photo, Jay-Z performs during the All Points West music festival at Liberty State Park, in Jersey City, N.J.
AP

James Taylor to hold Haiti benefit show in US

GREAT BARRINGTON, Massachusetts (AP) — James Taylor is planning a benefit concert in Massachusetts to aid earthquake relief efforts in Haiti.

Proceeds from the concert scheduled for Friday at The Mahaiwe Performing Arts Center in Great Barrington will go to Partners in Health. The Boston-based group brings modern medical care to poor nations and has been working in Haiti for more than 20 years.

Singer-songwriter Taylor says in a statement that he and his wife, Kim, will match proceeds from sales of tickets. Prices range from $100 to $1,000.

Taylor lives in nearby Lenox. He will be joined onstage by his wife, singers Kate Markowitz and Arnold McCuller, and Boston Symphony Orchestra cellist Owen Young.

Men find plenty to love in big, beautiful women

By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

Dear Abby

DEAR ABBY: "Happy Being Me in Massachusetts" (Nov. 20) is a large girl whose mother told her "heavy women are not desirable." Well, I was a size 18/20 and weighed more than 200 pounds when I met my husband while out with mutual friends. He's good-looking, smart, witty, affectionate and passionate. He's everything a woman looks for in a life partner.

He had never dated a plus-size woman before, but he was smitten from the moment he saw me, and pursued me from the start because he thought I have a beautiful face and a great personality. We have one child and another on the way, and he finds me as appealing now as he did the night we met.

No woman should ever "settle" for a partner, and "Happy" should not do so just because her mother thinks she's "too heavy." That mother is trying to pass her low self-esteem issues along to her daughter, and I hope "Happy" is savvy enough to brush it off. Big girls can be sexy, too, because there's nothing sexier than confidence.

MICHELLE IN MICHIGAN

DEAR MICHELLE: The letters of encouragement in support of "Happy" have far outweighed her mother's negative stance. Read on:

DEAR ABBY: "Happy Being Me" needs to know that there are men like me who prefer plus-size women. My wife weighs 275 pounds, and I think she's gorgeous. "Happy" just needs to put herself out there, and one of us will find her.

HAPPY WITH MY LARGE LADY

DEAR ABBY: I met my first husband when I wore a much smaller size. As the years went on, my size increased. He ended up leaving me for a smaller girl.

After our split, I moved home and the first words out of my mother's mouth were, "You need to work on yourself because you're not going to find someone new looking like you do." It was extremely hurtful, but beyond that, it was WRONG.

Less than a year after my divorce, I was in a healthy relationship with a man who loved me for myself. We married, have a baby and are living happily ever after. The size of my jeans has never mattered to my hubby—only the size of my heart.

BIG JEANS, BIGGER HEART

DEAR ABBY: In the past, I admit I was one of those men who wouldn't look twice at a large girl. Then I met my wife. She wasn't exactly petite, but it didn't matter. She truly is the girl of my dreams.

We have both gained some weight over the years, but size really doesn't matter. "Happy's" mother is wrong. The right woman can always find the right man.

LUCKY MAN IN ALBUQUERQUE

DEAR ABBY: I attend dances every month that support women of size. I met my dream man at one of them a few months ago. He is kind, supportive, handsome and loves my body. (And I love his!)

Because society says that a larger woman isn't attractive doesn't mean EVERYONE thinks so. When I started going to functions for plus-sized women at the age of 26, I found a whole new world where I was accepted and welcomed.

"Happy" should get on to her Web browser and look for "Big Beautiful Women" groups in her area. Love is out there—for ALL body types.

LARGE AND IN LOVE

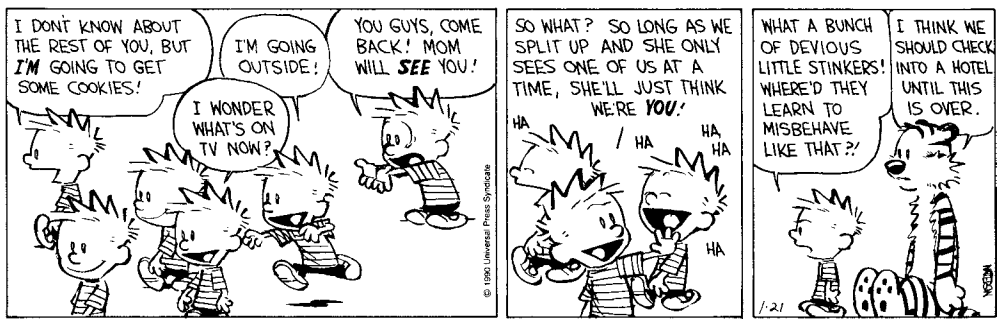
DEAR ABBY: My mother, who is big, wonderful and loving, made me appreciate large women. My wife was small in high school and "blossomed" later. I love my "big gal wife" and support her in every way possible. If she wants to change her appearance, then I want her to do it for herself. And if she's happy the way she is, I'm OK with that, too. "Happy Being Me" just needs to be confident in her own skin and she will find "Mr. Right," not "Mr. Right Now."

BRIAN IN WISCONSIN

Pastimes

Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson


I DON'T KNOW ABOUT THE REST OF YOU, BUT I'M GOING TO GET SOME COOKIES!
I'M GOING OUTSIDE!
I WONDER WHAT'S ON TV NOW?
YOU GUYS, COME BACK! MOM WILL SEE YOU!
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SO WHAT? SO LONG AS WE SPLIT UP AND SHE ONLY SEES ONE OF US AT A TIME, SHE'LL JUST THINK WE'RE YOU!
HA
HA
HA
HA
HA
WHAT A BUNCH OF DEVIOUS LITTLE STINKERS! WHERE'D THEY LEARN TO MISBEHAVE LIKE THAT?!
I THINK WE SHOULD CHECK INTO A HOTEL UNTIL THIS IS OVER.
1-21

Garfield®

By Jim Davis

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WHERE SHOULD WE GO ON OUR NEXT VACATION, GARFIELD?
FUNNY YOU SHOULD ASK!...
JIM DAVIS 1-21

Adam@home

By Bryan Basset

MOM, HOW CAN I BE RICH WHEN I'M OLDER?
RESPECT YOUR ELDERS.
HUH? HOW WILL THAT MAKE ME RICH?
IT'LL MAKE YOU RICH IN SPIRIT.
I'M LOOKING FOR MORE OF A "RICH IN FUNDS"
WELL, A DEEP SPIRITUAL BANK ACCOUNT IS MORE REWARDING.
YOU CAN'T BUY A 100" FLATSCREEN WITH SPIRITUAL FUNDS!!
YOU COULD PRAY FOR ONE.
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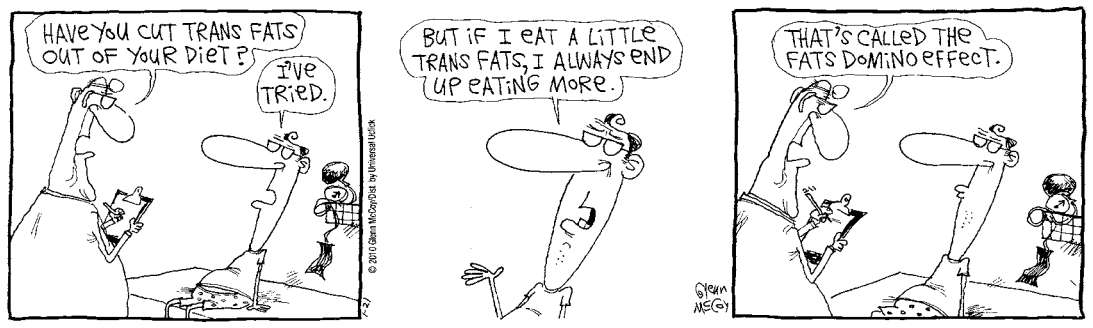
HARRELL

The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy


HAVE YOU CUT TRANS FATS OUT OF YOUR DIET?
I'VE TRIED.
© 2010 Glenn McCoy/Dist. by Universal Uclick
1-21
BUT IF I EAT A LITTLE TRANS FATS, I ALWAYS END UP EATING MORE.
THAT'S CALLED THE FATS DOMINO EFFECT.
Glenn McCoy

CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS

1 — -jongg
4 Visibility hindrance
8 Be a model
12 Sch. org.
13 Ugandan despot
14 Easter emblem
15 Sharp turns
17 Shaving cream add-in
18 Knock
19 Surmised
21 Nicklaus contemporary
24 Corrode
25 Foreman rival
26 Pinch
28 Incenses
32 Equivoques
34 Tie up the phone
36 Manage somehow
37 Modify
39 Knight's address
41 Once called
42 Scull need
44 Big Mac or Whopper
46 Fame
50 Doo follower
51 Diner employee
52 Terrier type
56 Heche or Hathaway
57 List-ending abbr.
58 401(k) alternative
59 Stagger
60 Say it ain't so
61 Roulette bet

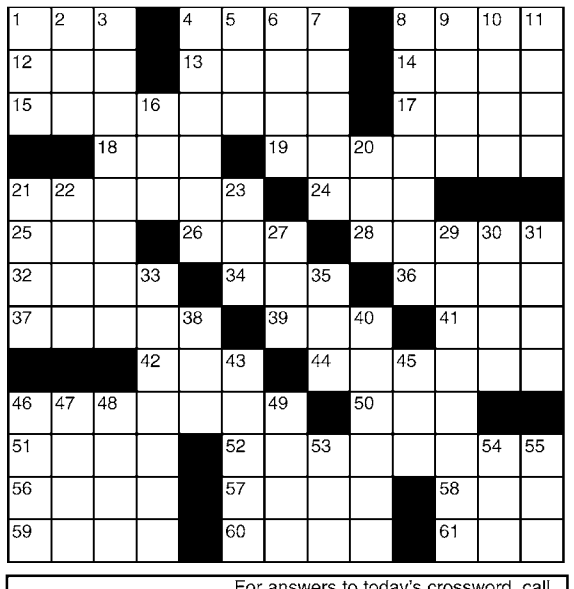
DOWN

1 Speedometer stat
2 — standstill
3 Tiny, as a fracture
4 Occur
5 Parisian pal
6 Pizzazz
7 Follow as a result
8 Credit cards
9 Rembrandt creations
10 With 11-Down, having dark peepers
11 See 10-Down
16 Aries
20 Corn spike
21 One of the Three Bears
22 Astringent
23 Horse and buggy, e.g.
27 — de deux
29 Classical-music lover
30 Foil's cousin
31 Crystal gazer
33 Diver's aid
35 Chest protector
38 Pop
40 Without courtesy
43 Used 42-Across
45 "Go, team!"
46 Cicatrix
47 Sound quality
48 Top-notch
49 Wee parasite
53 Scooted
54 Anger
55 "Way cool!"

Solution time: 25 mins.

A	C	T	■	P	O	S	E	■	A	B	E	D
T	O	O	■	I	R	O	N	■	C	I	A	O
O	A	F	■	C	A	N	D	Y	C	O	R	N
P	L	U	C	K	■	■	S	E	E	■	■	■
■	■	■	A	L	E	S	■	T	S	A	R	S
C	A	N	D	E	L	A	S	■	S	U	E	T
A	P	E	■	D	E	L	I	A	■	L	E	A
M	E	A	D	■	C	A	N	D	I	D	L	Y
E	X	T	R	A	■	D	O	J	O	■	■	■
■	■	■	E	L	F	■	■	U	N	Z	I	P
C	A	N	D	L	E	M	A	S	■	E	R	E
A	G	O	G	■	E	A	S	T	■	S	A	N
R	O	D	E	■	T	O	S	S	■	T	N	T

Yesterday's answer 1-21



STUMPED? For answers to today's crossword, call **1-900-226-5955**! 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Izabella Miko, 29; Emma Bunton, 34; Hakeem Olajuwon, 47; Geena Davis, 54

Happy Birthday: You can make great strides toward your present and future goals. This is a time for you to take your life seriously and make the adjustments that honor your beliefs and fulfill your dreams. There is money to be made but you must be willing to budget so you will have the funds to put your plans into motion. Your numbers are 2, 4, 15, 22, 25, 36, 40

ARIES (*March 21-April 19*): Don't fold under pressure. You cannot let emotional restrictions slow you down or interfere with your plans. A personal relationship will offer you encouragement and support and help you establish what it is you want to do. ✪✪✪

TAURUS (*April 20-May 20*): Stop wasting time and get on with business. Someone you have worked with or met in the past will offer you an opportunity worth considering. A geographical move may not be a bad idea. ✪✪✪

GEMINI (*May 21-June 20*): Pick up skills or improve your lifestyle or your future in any way possible. You have plenty going for you. Don't settle for anything less than what you want. A favor will be granted for something you've done in the past. ✪✪✪✪

CANCER (*June 21-July 22*): Don't take anyone who is playing emotional games too seriously. A change of plans will turn out to be to your benefit, so don't make a fuss. Alterations at home will be better than anticipated and will be cost-efficient. ✪✪

LEO (*July 23-Aug. 22*): A change at work will help you determine what direction you should take in order to advance. Take action. Waiting around to see what everyone else does will cost you personally and professionally. ✪✪✪✪✪

VIRGO (*Aug. 23-Sept. 22*): Make a commitment to someone you want to have in your corner. A change at home will come about if you discuss your plans. There is money to be made if you make a move or invest in something or someone to make a profit. ✪✪✪

LIBRA (*Sept. 23-Oct. 22*): Don't limit what you can do because someone is trying to make you feel guilty. Use your intuition to guide you in the right direction and you will not go wrong. Someone from your past will provide you with information you need. ✪✪✪

SCORPIO (*Oct. 23-Nov. 21*): You can make some drastic changes that will allow you to do more things that interest you. An emotional relationship may need a little extra attention. Plan a romantic evening and you can make amends. ✪✪✪

SAGITTARIUS (*Nov. 22-Dec. 21*): Your emotional outlook will catch the attention of someone you've known a long time. Travel plans will give you greater incentive to work hard. You will receive recognition for a job well done if you pay close attention to detail. ✪✪✪✪✪

CAPRICORN (*Dec. 22-Jan. 19*): Look into the possibility of making some personal changes that allow you to be closer to work or to make a professional jump to another field of interest. Don't limit yourself. Opportunities exist. ✪✪

AQUARIUS (*Jan. 20-Feb. 18*): Don't give in to someone putting demands on you or asking for unreasonable favors. It may be time to start thinking about your recent choices—decide whom you do or don't want in your life. The people you associate with can make a difference to your reputation. ✪✪✪✪

PISCES (*Feb. 19-March 20*): Take a chance on someone or something offered to you. A professional change may lead you down an altogether different path. A challenge will raise your confidence and prove you have something worth offering. ✪✪✪

Birthday Baby: You are intelligent, sensitive and passionate about your beliefs. You are curious and adventuresome. You are sharp-eyed and disciplined.

Eugenia's Web sites: ***eugenialast.com*** *for confidential consultations,* ***myspace.com/eugenialast*** *for Eugenia's blog,* ***astroadvice.com*** *for fun*

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku *By Dave Green*

		5						6
			2		7			
3			1			4		
	5	6		8			4	
			3	1	9			
	7			5		2	9	
		9			1			3
			5		4			
8						7		

Difficulty Level ★★★ 1/21

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Yesterday's SUDOKU Answer

2	1	4	5	7	8	3	9	6
9	3	6	4	2	1	8	5	7
5	8	7	3	9	6	1	2	4
1	5	8	2	6	9	4	7	3
7	9	2	8	3	4	5	6	1
4	6	3	1	5	7	9	8	2
8	2	5	7	1	3	6	4	9
6	7	1	9	4	5	2	3	8
3	4	9	6	8	2	7	1	5

Difficulty Level ★★★ 1/20

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WONDERWORD®

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally, even backward. Find them and **CIRCLE THEIR LETTERS ONLY. DO NOT CIRCLE THE WORD.** The leftover letters spell the Wonderword.

ROCK 'N' ROLL **Solution: 8 letters**

A	E	D	A	C	E	D	R	U	M	U	S	I	C	Y
C	M	R	A	T	I	U	G	N	I	W	S	E	E	T
C	L	E	U	D	E	I	F	I	L	P	M	A	W	R
E	H	V	R	T	A	E	B	F	F	O	L	I	W	A
N	C	I	V	I	L	R	I	G	H	T	S	Y	O	P
T	H	L	G	F	C	U	E	S	E	T	K	D	R	C
E	U	N	G	H	A	A	C	R	S	C	E	D	L	R
D	C	L	E	O	B	S	N	P	L	A	Y	U	D	A
R	K	M	Y	E	L	A	H	L	L	I	B	B	W	Z
A	B	O	P	R	T	D	C	I	L	S	O	I	I	E
H	E	D	T	I	I	S	E	K	O	O	A	M	D	V
C	R	E	V	R	A	C	I	N	B	N	R	P	E	L
I	R	E	V	O	C	N	S	V	A	E	D	A	V	E
R	Y	R	A	D	I	O	O	I	L	G	A	C	O	W
I	N	F	L	U	E	N	C	E	C	E	E	T	M	T

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Accented, Alternative, American, Amplified, Backbeat, Bass, Bill Haley, Buddy, Chuck Berry, Civil Rights, Clubs, Cover, Craze, Culture, Decade, Drum, Elvis, Fashion, Freedom, Golden Age, Guitar, High, Home, Impact, Influence, Keyboard, Live, Lyrics, Move, Music, Off-beat, Party, Piano, Play, Radio, Richard, Roll, Swing, Teen, Twelve, Twist, Worldwide

Yesterday's Answer: Teamwork

We listened to your requests! **TREASURY #6** is the first-ever Wonderword book containing only 20 x 20 puzzles, with 75 of these large puzzles. To order, send check or money order for $10.95 each plus $3.25 p&h ($14.20 total each, U.S. funds only) for the first volume, $1.50 p&h for each additional volume, to Wonderword, Universal Uclick, 1130 Walnut St., Kansas City, Mo. 64106 or call toll-free 1-800-642-6480. Order online at upuzzles.com.

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Saipan Tribune

Vacancy Announcement

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Our company is a dynamic wholesaler and distributor of leading consumer goods, popular general merchandise and institutional products in Guam and in the CNMI. We are currently in need of a Sales Representative for Cosmos Saipan with the following requirements:

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2. Must possess excellent customer service, written and oral communication skills.
3. Must be computer literate and knowledgeable in word processing and spreadsheet software.
4. Must possess a valid driver's license and with a good driving record.

The successful candidate will be responsible for the sales of assigned products and merchandise to retail stores and other outlets from existing accounts or thru newly acquired customers. His/her job will entail regular visits to establishments and sales calls on existing and prospective customers to solicit orders. He/she must be able to meet monthly sales goals.

Interested applicants may send their resume to: thchr@tanholdings.com

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Monir Hossain
P.O. Box 503235
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Phone: 285-8832 / 288-0873

Pro Se,

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

MONIR HASSAIN, Petitioner, vs. MACCY AUGUSTINO HOSSAIN, Respondent.	FCD DI CIVIL ACTION NO. 10-0013 SUMMONS FOR PUBLICATION

TO THE ABOVE NAME RESPONDENT:

YOU ARE HEREBY SUMMONED and notified to file any answer you wish to make to the Complaint, a copy of which is on file with the court, within thirty (30) days after service of the Summons upon you, and to deliver or mail a copy of your answer to the Petitioner whose address is P.O. Box 503235 as soon as practical after filing your answer or sending it to the Clerk of Courts for filing.

Your answer should by in writing and filed with the Clerk of this Court at Susupe, Saipan, MP 96950. It may be prepared for you by your counsel and sent to the Clerk of this Court by messenger or Mail. It is not necessary for you to appear personally until further notice. If you fail to file and answer in accordance with this summons, judgment by default may be taken against you for relief in the complaint.

Dated this 15th day of January, 2010.

/s/ Clerk of Court

COMMONWEALTH PORTS AUTHORITY

Main Office: SAIPAN INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT
P.O. BOX 501055 • SAIPAN • MP 96950-1055
Phone: (670) 237-6500 Fax: (670) 234-5962
E-Mail Address: cpa.admin@pticom.com • Website: www.cpa.gov.mp

JOB VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

Opening date: January 21, 2010 **Closing date: February 5, 2010**

The Commonwealth Ports Authority (CPA) announces the following job vacancies:

Position:
(1)Comptroller-Saipan
(1)Deputy Comptroller-Saipan
(1) Assistant Chief of Administration/ Training – Ports Police, Saipan
(1) Assistant Chief of Operations- Ports Police, Saipan
(2)Radio Operator/Weather Observer-Rota

Employment Application must be accompanied with a copy of all required diploma/certificates and/or official transcripts, original copy of recent police record not more that six (6) months old, original copy of U.S. Department of Defense Form DD214 for retired members or veterans of our Armed Forces, and other documents as required for the position. Public Law 11-70 requires that all male applicants age 18 to 26 years old must submit documentation evidencing his registration with the Federal Selective Service System. Failure to provide any of the required documents may result in automatic disqualification. Selected applicants will be subjected to pre-employment drug screening. The deadline for submission of applications is no later than ***4:30 p.m., February 5, 2010.***

Comptroller: Possess A four (4) year degree in accounting, finance or related field from an accredited U.S. college or university with no less than five (5) years of progressively responsible experience in professional accounting, finance or managerial level of which three (3) years pertain to supervisory level. Accounting experience in autonomous agencies and/or a certified public accountant is preferred.

Deputy Comptroller: A Masters Degree in Accounting or related field from an accredited US college or university with no less than two (2) years of progressively responsible experience in a professional accounting level; Bachelors Degree candidate must posses no less than six (6) years of progressively responsible experience in a professional accounting level of which three (2) years pertain to supervisory experience; Associates Degree candidates must posses eight (8) years of experience in accounting of which three (4) years pertain to supervisory experience.

Ports Police Assistant Chief for Admin./Training: Any combination equivalent to graduation from high school (or G.E.D.) possess a certificate in Police Science or an AA degree in Police Science or Law Enforcement is desirable from an accredited U.S. college or university with no less than eight (8) years of progressively responsible experience in airport security or law enforcement programs of which four (4) years pertain to supervisory experience. Must be certified for fire arms and deputized as law officer by the local department of public safety.

Ports Police Assistant Chief for Operations: Any combination equivalent to graduation from high school (or G.E.D.) and AA degree in Police Science, law enforcement or related field from an accredited U.S. college or university with no less than eight (8) years of progressively responsible experience in airport security or law enforcement programs of which four (4) years pertain to supervisory experience. Must be certified for fire arms and deputized as law officer by the local department of public safety.

Radio Operator/Weather Observer: Graduation from high school (or G.E.D.). No record of felony or criminal conviction.

Detailed information on qualifications and position description for the above positions may be picked up along with the application form during regular working hours at the CPA's Office (2nd Floor) of the Saipan International Airport, Arrival Wing, or may be downloaded by visiting CPA's website at www.cpa.gov.mp. For more information, please contact Ms. Addy C. Manahane by email at acmanahane@cpa.gov.mp or by phone at (670) 237-6500.

CPA is an Equal Opportunity Employer and CPA hires those who are legally entitled to employment in the CNMI.

/s/EDWARD M. DELEON-GUERRERO
Executive Director

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Saipan Tribune also offers a Super Saver Package—a complete 6-day run on both print and online edition, for as low as $27 for garage sales, apartment rentals, help wanted, auto and more. You can choose from any of the packages below.

ADS	(PRINT)	COMBO (PRINT AND ONLINE)
• 3-Liner	$15	$27
• 5-Liner	$24	$39
• 3-Liner with picture	$24	$42
• 5-Liner with picture	$36	$57

ADVERTISING DEADLINE

Classified Ads

Ads must be submitted before 12 noon 2 days prior to publication date

Saturday Issue:
- *Saipan Tribune:* All ads placed Friday before 12 noon will come out Saturday issue and anything placed thereafter will be published on Monday issue.

CANCELLATION

Classified Ads

Cancellations should be made before 12 noon of the day prior to date of publication.

REFUNDS

Refunds will only be made if cancellation deadlines are met. No refunds will be made once ad is already printed.

CHECK YOUR ADS

Saipan Tribune will not be responsible for errors after the first day of publication. Errors should be called in before noon of the issue date. *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to place ads under proper headings and to revise copy when necessary.

ADVERTISING POLICY

All advertising in the *Saipan Tribune* are subject to applicable rate sheet, copies of which are available from the Advertising Sales Department (please call 235-8747, 235-2769 or 235-6397). All ads will be subject to approval prior to publication. We reserve the right to edit, refuse, reject or cancel any ad at any time. Also, *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to place ads under proper headings and to revise copy when necessary.

WHATZIT?™

Find the familiar phrase, saying or name in this arrangement of letters.

DRACULA
DUE

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Find today's solution in this section

LeBron just misses triple-double as Cavs down Raps

CLEVELAND (AP)—Shaquille O'Neal had one regret about moving into elite NBA scoring air. It should have happened long ago.

O'Neal became the fifth player to score 28,000 career points, and the Big Diesel made his enormous presence known at both ends of the floor as the Cleveland Cavaliers began a long stretch of home games with a 108-100 win over the Toronto Raptors on Tuesday night.

O'Neal reached the major milestone with a layup in the first minute. He was proud of the achievement, but felt it was overdue.

"I've missed like 5,000 free throws," O'Neal said. "If I had at least hit half of those, then I would be at 30,000 right now."

LeBron James scored 28 points and performed a few signature dunks that won't be seen during the All-Star slam contest and Mo Williams added 22 as the Cavs, who just returned from a long road trip, improved to 15-3 at Quicken Loans Arena. They play 10 of their next 12 at home before Feb. 19.

The Eastern Conference leaders will host the Los Angeles Lakers on Thursday night.

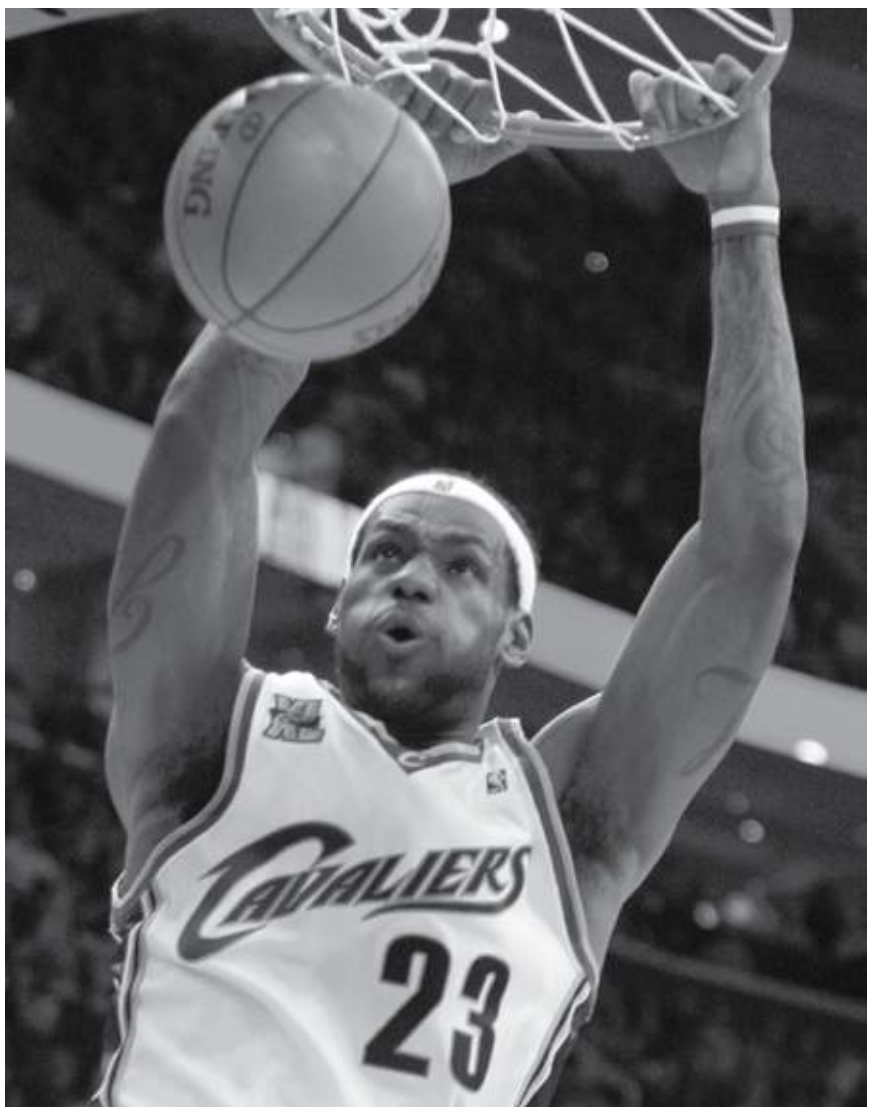
James had 11 assists and nine rebounds, missing out on No. 10 and a triple-double when he let a rebound slip out of his hands in the final minute.

O'Neal added 16 points, assisted on two big baskets down the stretch and set the tone for Cleveland's defense in the second half by knocking down Toronto guards Demar DeRozan and Jarrett Jack with hard fouls.

"There's no layups when Shaq is covering the glass," James said. "That's what he's about. He doesn't care about putting guys on the floor."

With a layup in the opening minute, O'Neal joined Kareem Abdul-Jabbar (38,387), Karl Malone (36,928), Michael Jordan (32,292) and Wilt Chamberlain (31,419) as the only players to reach the milestone.

"I'm happy being No. 5. There are some great names in front of me and some great names behind me," O'Neal said. "I've always been a player that only gets happy about the big picture. It's a great milestone but it's something I don't get too giddy about."



AP

Cleveland Cavaliers' LeBron James dunks the ball in the fourth quarter of an NBA basketball game against the Toronto Raptors on Tuesday, Jan. 19, 2010, in Cleveland.

Chris Bosh scored 21 for Toronto but was limited to just five after halftime by Cleveland's defense, which allowed 60 points in the opening half. The Raptors only scored 17 in the fourth.

"They did a better job of clamping down defensively," Bosh said. "We had a couple of mishaps down the stretch and they made us pay for it."

Williams left briefly with a left shoulder strain but came back and hit the game's biggest shot, a 3-pointer—off a feed from O'Neal—with 5:27 left that gave the Cavs a 98-94 lead. James found a cutting Anderson Varejao for a basket to put the Cavs up by six and then James took a pass from O'Neal and slammed one to make it 102-94.

"I've been known to be able to do something with the ball," O'Neal said in explaining his assists.

Cleveland's defense, nearly nonexistent for three quarters, put its talons in the Raptors in the fourth quarter.

"We put our hard hats on and did it right," James said.

Andrea Bargnani scored 19 for Toronto, which lost for just the fourth time in 14 games. Hedo Turkoglu scored three points—10 below his average—and spent most of the game in foul trouble.

"I was afraid to walk by them (the officials), they might call a foul," Turkoglu said.

Williams added 10 assists for the Cavs, who have won 10 straight home games over the Raptors.

James has decided to skip next month's dunk contest, long considered the premier event during the All-Star weekend's festivities. At last year's event in Phoenix, James tentatively put himself in the field after watching a competition he felt needed a spark and some big names.

Now, he's not interested.

"I'm just not high on it," he said.

During the second quarter, James delivered a dunk that probably would have earned a few "10s" from the judges. Williams drove the baseline and delivered a no-look bounce pass to a slashing James, who caught the ball and double clutched before pounding it through the rim.

In the first half, the Raptors did almost anything they wanted on offense. They got easy shots and moved the ball with ease against Cleveland's shoddy defense. O'Neal finally took a stand in the third quarter, sending a message to Toronto with two hard fouls.

On the second one, which was O'Neal's fourth personal, the 325-pounder flattened Jack, who flopped to the floor and flung his arm to one side for dramatic effect.

"That's a part of the game," Bosh said. "He's the biggest guy in the league. If he bumps you, you're probably going to hit the ground."

Heat 113, Pacers 83

At Miami, Dwyane Wade scored 18 of his 32 points in the first quarter as Miami ran out to a commanding early lead then cruised against Indiana.

Michael Beasley scored 21 for Miami, which led 36-19 after one quarter and by 23 at one point in the opening half. Wade shot 12 of 20 and passed the career 11,000-point mark with a second-quarter layup. The Heat rested most of their starters for the entire fourth quarter.

Brandon Rush scored 17 for the Pacers, who are 4-17 on the road and 0-3 against the Heat this season.

Shaq wants stars to dunk

CLEVELAND (AP)—Shaquille O'Neal has a plan to save the NBA's All-Star dunk contest: Bring back the superstars and do it for devastated Haiti.

Following Tuesday night's win over Toronto, O'Neal was asked if he would like to see teammate LeBron James participate in this year's event. That's when he offered his idea. He would like to see former dunk champion Vince Carter, Kobe Bryant and others take part along with James.

"As his manager, I will only allow 'Bron to do the dunk contest if Vince Carter comes back out," O'Neal said. "If Kobe comes back out and if another big name comes back out. If we could get a big prize and have half of the money go to the people of Haiti and the other half to the winner.

"The guys that are in it, no disrespect to them, but there won't really be any competition for LeBron. I want to see Kobe. I want to see Vince and I will allow my client to enter."

Could he make it happen?

"I'm saying it now," O'Neal said. "So tweet it. Facebook it. E-mail it and hopefully it gets out. Vince, we're calling you out. Kobe, we're calling you out. We're calling everybody out. If those guys step up in the dunk contest, then I will allow my client to step up."

James has decided to skip next month's event in Dallas after originally saying he would participate.

Bills hire Chan Gailey as head coach

ORCHARD PARK, N.Y. (AP)—Chan Gailey's second chance to prove himself as an NFL head coach comes with plenty of challenges.

The Buffalo Bills team he's taking over hasn't made the playoffs in a decade and its fans have been clamoring for Bill Cowher during a coaching search that seemed to take forever.

Instead of landing one of the big-name coaches with loaded resumes such as Cowher or Mike Shanahan, Gailey—who coached the Dallas Cowboys for two less-than-inspiring seasons—was introduced Tuesday as the 15th head coach in Bills history—and fifth in 10 years.

"I can't say anything to change anybody's mind. All I can do is go try to help us win football games," Gailey said. "We win football games, everybody's minds will be changed, right?"

Gailey was hired by first-time general manager Buddy Nix, ending a two-month search to replace Dick Jauron, who was fired in November. He takes over a Bills team coming off its fifth straight losing season following a 6-10 finish, and in the midst of a 10-year playoff drought that is tied with Detroit as the longest active streak in the NFL.

"I've been around enough winning programs ... that when I walk on the field I expect to win. I don't just hope to win," Gailey said. "But the bottom line is we've got to do it on the field"

Gailey has spent 15 of his 35 years of coaching in the NFL. In his two years coaching the Dallas Cowboys, he went 18-14 and led the team to consecutive playoff appearances—both losses. He was dismissed after the 1999 season, and Cowboys owner Jerry Jones has acknowledged his mistake in firing Gailey.

For Nix, it was Gailey's extensive experience that impressed him and met most of the criteria the GM set out when he took over the search two weeks ago.

Nix was eager to find someone with previous head-coaching experience and who had an offensive background.

"Without any doubt in my mind, we got the best qualified guy, a guy that was on the list early," Nix said. "We got the right guy for us. I've got full confidence in him to answer your question."

Gailey also got a big vote of support from Jones in Dallas. The Cowboys owner on Tuesday not only congratulated Gailey upon his return to the NFL head coaching ranks, but Jones also reiterated that he still regrets firing Gailey.

"I'm proud for Chan Gailey," Jones said. "I'm glad to see him have the opportunity to get back as head coach in the NFL. He did an outstanding job at Georgia Tech. He's really a top coach and will do a great job."

Gailey has been out of football since he was removed as the Chiefs' offensive coordinator in August, two weeks before the season opener. He was entering his second season with Kansas City after a six-year stretch as Georgia Tech's coach, during which he went 44-33 before being fired in 2007.

Nix is already being second-guessed for how he conducted the coaching search, during which Jets offensive coordinator Brian Schottenheimer turned down the Bills request for an interview last week. And it was a search that featured several prominent candidates who had raised fan expectations.

The Bills spoke to Cowher in a bid to lure the former Steelers coach out of his career in broadcasting. Fans raised $1,125 to rent a billboard in Buffalo last week urging team owner Ralph Wilson to hire Cowher. The team also interviewed former Broncos coach Shanahan, who instead chose to coach the Washington Redskins.

Vikings defensive coordinator Leslie Frazier was considered the top candidate after interviewing two weeks ago. Frazier's stock appeared to climb even further after his defense shut down the Cowboys in Minnesota's 34-3 win in the playoffs Sunday.

Nix said he conducted a thorough search and refused to be influenced by the fans or media.

"I can stand up here on the soap box and tell you what we're going to do, you've heard that before," Nix said. "So I'm not going to waste my time or yours. But I will tell you this, in November or December, I think you'll know more about what we're about."

Gailey and Nix have crossed paths going back to the 1970s, when both began their football careers as college coaches in the south.

With Buffalo, Gailey's top priority will be sparking an offense that has finished 25th or worst in yards gained in each of the past seven seasons.

Gailey intends to handle the offensive play-calling duties next season.

Along with assembling a coaching staff, Gailey said he intends to address the Bills quarterback situation soon. A combination of injuries and futility led to the Bills to go through three starters this past year.

Bills defensive end Chris Kelsay supported the team's decision to hire Gailey.

"I've been through this a number of times, and eventually you've got to get it right, and I think they will," said Kelsay, who completed his seventh season in Buffalo. "I think we're headed in the right direction. ... It is time for change, and I think we're do for a little success as well."

Clijsters, Kuznetsova, Nadal advance to 3rd round

MELBOURNE, Australia (AP)—U.S. Open champion Kim Clijsters took another step toward winning consecutive Grand Slams with a 6-3, 6-3 win over Tamarine Tanasugarn in the second round of the Australian Open on Wednesday.

The 26-year-old Belgian will next play No. 19 Nadia Petrova, one of the Russian women already into the third round along with French Open champion Svetlana Kuznetsova, last year's Australian Open runner-up Dinara Safina and Maria Kirilenko.

Defending champion Rafael Nadal converted five of his first six breakpoint chances in an emphatic 6-2, 6-2, 6-2 second-round win over Slovakia's Lukas Lacko, extending his run to nine straight wins at Melbourne Park.

"I played a serious match. I think I played the match what I need to play," said Nadal, a six-time Grand Slam winner. "I was playing, moving well in the beginning without mistakes, having with the control of the ball."

No. 7 Andy Roddick had a heated exchange with the chair umpire over a line call after his 6-3, 6-4, 6-4 win over Brazilian Thomaz Bellucci, while No. 11 Fernando Gonzalez of Chile, the 2007 runner-up, beat Turkey's Marsel Ilhan 6-3, 6-4, 7-5.

American John Isner had a 6-3, 7-6 (4), 7-5 second-round win over Louk Sorenson, who on Tuesday became the first Irishman to win a Grand Slam main draw match.

Clijsters won the U.S. Open in September in only her third tournament back from two years off the tour in which she got married and had a baby.

Despite her success at Flushing Meadnows, Clijsters said she still had plenty to prove, to herself and the other players on the circuit.

"My attitude doesn't change because now I'm seen as one of the favorites," she said. "To me, that doesn't mean anything."

The No. 15-ranked Clijsters won the last six games after an early service break in the second set against the 32-year-old Tamarine.

Clijsters improved to 20 wins and three losses since her comeback, a run in which she became the first mother to win a major since Evonne Goolagong Cawley at Wimbledon in 1980.

She beat former No. 1-ranked Justine Henin for the title at the Brisbane International on Jan. 9 in what was Henin's comeback tournament after 20 months off the tour.

The Belgian pair will stay on track to meet in the quarterfinals here if unranked and unseeded Henin can get past Olympic gold medalist Elena Dementieva later Wednesday. Clijsters has reached the semifinals or better in her last five trips to Melbourne Park, and lost the 2004 final to Henin.

No. 16-ranked Yanina Wickmayer, a Belgian who didn't get a seeding here because her suspension for a World Anti-Doping Agency "whereabouts rule" violation hadn't been overturned before entries closed, reached the third-round with a 7-6 (2), 6-1 win over No. 12 Flavia Penneta of Italy.

Third-ranked Kuznetsova was first into the third round when she beat Anastasia Pavlyuchenkova 6-2, 6-2. No. 2 Safina had a 6-3, 6-4 win over Barbora Sahlavova Strycova—saving four breakpoints in the last game before serving it out.

Kuznetsova, who has two Grand Slam singles championships—adding the French last year to her win at the 2004 U.S. Open—has a chance to reach the No. 1 ranking for the first time if she clinches the Australian Open title.

"Yes, definitely, I know all the way how to go—I've done it twice," Kuznetsova said of her chances of winning a major. She's never gone past the quarterfinals in Melbourne.

Safina has held the No. 1 ranking but never won a major. She next plays Britain's Elena Baltacha, who has already equaled her best run at the season's first major by reaching the third round with a 6-2, 7-5 win over No. 30 Kateryna Bondarenko.

No. 11 Marion Bartoli advanced, while China's Zheng Jie won 2-6, 6-2, 6-3 over No. 24 Maria Jose Martinez of Spain.

In first-round matches carried over to Wednesday from the rain-interrupted opening days, No. 4 Caroline Wozniacki of Denmark, who lost the U.S. Open final to Clijsters, had a 6-4, 6-2 win over Canada's Aleksandra Wozniak.

In other first-round matches, No. 7 Victoria Azarenka, No. 9 Vera Zvonareva, No. 16 Li Na, No. 22 Daniela Hantuchova and No. 29 Shahar Peer all advanced.

Serena and Venus Williams won in the doubles Wednesday, starting the defense of their Australian title with a 6-1, 6-1 win.

The sisters won their opening singles matches along with men's No. 1 Roger Federer and No. 3 Novak Djokovic on Tuesday, Serena returning to Grand Slam play for the first time since her tirade against the line judge who called her for a foot fault during her U.S. Open semifinal loss to Clijsters.

And while the 11-time major winner did seem less effusive than usual in her 6-2, 6-1 win over 18-year-old Urszula Radwanska, she didn't hold back about what she thought of the $82,500 fine.

"I don't know whoever got fined like that. People said worse, done worse," she said, "I think it was a bit much."

Williams was warned she could be suspended from the U.S. Open for another "major offense" at any Grand Slam event in the next two years over the incident. Williams said she doubts whether one of the top men would have drawn such a fine.

"In tennis I think we've been able to do really well with having fought so hard to get equal prize money," Williams said. "I think that's really good," she said. "But I think we still sort of, say, live in a man's world. Some incidents can bring you back to life and back into reality."

AP

Rafael Nadal of Spain wave to the crowd after beating Lukas Lacko of Slovakia during the men's singles match at the Australian Open tennis championship in Melbourne, Australia, Wednesday Jan. 20, 2010.

Lincecum asks for $13 million in arbitration

NEW YORK (AP)—San Francisco Giants ace Tim Lincecum asked for $13 million in salary arbitration, a record for a player eligible for the first time, and Seattle pitcher Felix Hernandez closed in on a five-year contract with the Mariners worth about $78 million.

On the busiest day of baseball's offseason, 71 players eligible for arbitration reached agreements on contracts, leaving just 38 still on track for hearings next month. That's a fraction of the more than 200 players eligible for arbitration in November, the 128 who filed on Friday and the 46 who swapped figures with their teams earlier Tuesday.

Boston Red Sox closer Jonathan Papelbon agreed to a $9.35 million, one-year deal, the highest salary for a reliever with at least four years of major league service. The agreement surpassed Mariano Rivera's $7.25 million contract after the 2000 season and was halfway between the $10.25 million Papelbon asked for and the $8.45 million the Red Sox offered.

Colorado reached a preliminary agreement on a $22.5 million, three-year contract with closer Huston Street and a $7.55 million, two-year deal with setup man Rafael Betancourt, two other people said separately, also on condition of anonymity because the agreements were not yet final.

Lincecum is seeking the richest contract ever awarded in arbitration, surpassing the $10 million that Alfonso Soriano (2006) and Francisco Rodriguez (2008) received in losses and Ryan Howard won at a hearing in 2008. Howard's request had been the highest ever for a player in his first year of eligibility.

San Francisco offered $8 million to Lincecum, 40-17 with a 2.90 ERA since he was brought up early in the 2007 season. He won the NL Cy Young Award in his each of first two full seasons, becoming the first repeat winner since Randy Johnson from 1999-02. Lincecum was a bargain for the Giants last year, when he made $650,000.

Also on Tuesday, Lincecum agreed to pay $513 to resolve marijuana charges against him in Washington state. He originally faced two misdemeanor charges of marijuana and drug paraphernalia possession stemming from a traffic stop on Oct. 30. The charges were reduced to a civil infraction.

Hernandez asked for the second-highest figure in arbitration, $11.5 million, and the Mariners offered $7.2 million. The value of his agreement was confirmed by a person with knowledge of the deal, also on condition of anonymity because the contract was not yet finished.

Tampa Bay and pitcher Matt Garza both filed at $3.35 million, an unusual occurrence. Not surprisingly, they also agreed at that figure.

Lincecum's $5 million difference with the Giants is the largest among cases that could be decided by three-person panels of arbitrators. Other large gaps also involved pitchers: Joe Blanton and Philadelphia ($10.25 million vs. $7.5 million), Justin Verlander and Detroit ($8.5 million and $6.9 million) and Wandy Rodriguez and Houston ($7 million and $5 million).

Among free agents, the Tigers finalized their $14 million, two-year contract with Jose Valverde, who will become their closer.

Bengie Molina opted to stay with the San Francisco Giants, agreeing to a one-year deal that guarantees the catcher $4.5 million and allows him to earn $1.5 million more based on games started, two people familiar with those talks said. They spoke on condition of anonymity because that agreement wasn't announced.

Molina turned down a proposal from the New York Mets that would have guaranteed $5.5 million and included a vesting option for 2011.

UConn coach Calhoun taking a medical leave

HARTFORD, Conn. (AP)—Connecticut men's basketball coach Jim Calhoun took a medical leave Tuesday for an undisclosed condition, the latest health concern for the 67-year-old Hall of Famer.

The school did not provide additional details. Calhoun had prostate cancer in 2003 and skin cancer twice, most recently in 2008.

Dr. Peter Schulman, the coach's primary-care physician, said in a statement he advised Calhoun to take time off "to address some temporary medical issues, none of which involve any previous medical conditions that he has dealt with."

Associate head coach George Blaney will run the Huskies in Calhoun's absence. UConn is 11-6 and fell out of the Top 25 this week after losing three straight games. The Huskies host St. John's on Wednesday night and top-ranked Texas on Saturday.

"Our primary concern is coach Calhoun's health and his complete recovery," UConn athletic director Jeff Hathaway said. "We will do everything possible to support Coach during this time.

Calhoun usually meets with the media the day before the game. He was not available Tuesday—a day earlier, the school said he had prior commitments and a late practice.

Calhoun has won two national championships at Connecticut. He guided the Huskies to the Final Four last season, but missed the Huskies' first NCAA tournament game in March after being hospitalized for dehydration.

Rosario draws first blood in SGA

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

Defending SGA Ace of Ace champion Vince Deleon Guerrero Rosario is assured of a chance to defend his title this year after ruling the Saipan Golfers Association's January Ace tournament on Sunday at Coral Ocean Point.

The 27-handicapper was consistent at the Agingan Point course, shooting a 48 on both nines for a gross 96 and net 69 to earn the first ticket to SGA's club championship. Rosario won the 2009 season-ending tournament and hoisted a perpetual trophy carding the lowest net score of 139 in the two-day event held at Kingfisher Golf Links on Nov. 28 and COP on Nov. 29.

At the start of the 2010 season, Rosario bested 21 other SGA members who vied for the first Ace of the month title. Rosario was four strokes ahead of runner-up Ed Sablan, who nailed a net 73, built on a 47 and 48 on the front and back nines, respectively. Sablan is a 22 handicapper and tallied a gross 97.

In third place was former Superior Court presiding judge Ed Manibusan, who recorded a 38 on the front and 39 on the back for a gross 77. Minus his three handicap, Manibusan ended up with a net 74.

SGA's Larry Guerrero expressed appreciation to fellow members who showed up for the first monthly tournament despite the bad weather. Guerrero said they played the whole 18 holes soaked in rain for almost six hours.

Besides the strong showers, SGA's first tournament was also marked by the return of former member Bob Magofna, who made one longest drive on hole No. 18 and two closest to the pin shots at hole No.7 and 14. Other closest to the pin winners were Rosario (No. 12) and Jose Demapan (No. 3).

Jess Castro was the other SGA member to make a longest drive (No. 6), while Ray San Nicolas posted the most birdies with five. Manibusan logged two birdies, while Demapan and Guerrero had one each.

Rosario

NONI

From Page 28

but the frigid air.

In regulation after trailing by six, 60-60, going into the last 1:02 of the fourth period, Diamond had a chance to steal the win when Bruce Berline was fouled and trooped to the foul line. Berline went 2-for-4 in his earlier visits at the stripe, while Elmer Esdrelon went 3-for-4 to move Diamond within one, 65-66, with 12 seconds left in regulation. Berline muffed another charity, but drilled his second to tie the match, 66-all.

Ivan De Vero went for a fastbreak play in Noni's ensuing play, missed the layup, but was fouled. With seven seconds left, De Vero had the opportunity to give Noni the win in regulation, but faltered in his two tries from the foul line.

Berline grabbed the rebound, but fumbled. Esdrelon picked up the loose ball, but was still at the backcourt when time expired, sending the game to extra five minutes.

In overtime, Noni still fared miserably from the 15-foot line, going 1-for-8 in the first three minutes. This allowed Diamond to take the lead on several occasions with the last time at the 72-71 count after Berline's putback.

Going into the last two minutes, Berline fouled out, but despite this big blow, Diamond remained in contention, tying the game, 73-all, after Esdrelon's split free throw, with 1:11 left in the game.

However, two missed reverse layups and errors from White Capalad ended Diamond's chances to pull off the win. Capalad's second muffed shot gave the ball back to Noni, which sued for time to set up a play.

When the match resumed Basila was fouled by John Artates. Basila faltered in his first free throw attempt before his second shot hit nothing but the bottom of the net, giving Noni a one-point lead.

With no time out left, Esdrelon rushed to their frontcourt and drove from the middle then turned left, but at the last second became gun shy, making a drop pass to White Capalad in the wings. Capalad was surprised with the pass and failed to catch the ball, losing it to the baseline with only a second left in the game.

The Noni-Diamond playoff tiff was first played on Friday, but was halted by rain with the former leading with 5:37 left in the second quarter, 30-23.

When the match continued, the equally punishing strong, frigid winds replaced the rain that has been hampering the league in the past several days. However, the cold weather failed to taper off the heat that had been brewing between Noni and Diamond starting in the third quarter.

There were a lot of pushing in and out of the paint, players attacking the basket were greeted with unforgiving defense, and those receiving and giving up fouls exchanged warning looks. The intense action led to a couple technical fouls charged against both camps and to the ejection of Diamond's Tim Wesley.

Wesley was ejected in the closing seconds of the regulation due to unsportsmanlike conduct. He was setting up a pick for Esdrelon and in the process banged into big man Glenn Aquino. Wesley and Aquino then both fell on the ground and on his way up, the former tried to swing a punch. Cooler heads stepped in, bringing Wesley to Diamond's bench, permanently.

Noni Saipan 74 – Bernardo 18, Abuel 15, Tamayo 13, De Vero 12, Demapan 8, Aquino 3, Basila 3.

Diamond 73 – Esdrelon 16, M. Capald 13, Barrios 10, Wesley 9, Berline 8, Artates 6, W. Capalad 5.

Scoring by quarters: 17-19, 36-39, 54-41, 66-66, 76-73.

BABAUTA

From Page 28

started in 2008.

"In October, 2008 I had my annual medical exam and all my health scores were off the charts. I was way overweight, eating the wrong food, and having high blood pressure and high cholesterol. I thought about my personal wellness that day. I thought about my family, most especially my kids and grandson. I want to be with them when they graduate from college, when they get married, and have a family, and I want to see my grandchildren grow," said Babauta in an inspirational speech he delivered in a forum hosted by Commonwealth Diabetes Coalition in 2008.

"The very next day I started to walk at the track and field. I said to myself, I will walk everyday. Then I got a bike and started to ride and walk. It (biking) made my walking easier, so I decided to start running after riding the bike. The first three weeks was the hardest, but after the third week, it was so addictive that my wife started to join me walking everyday," he added.

The rest is history, as the once stocky assistant general manager for operations at DFS Saipan lost more than 50 lbs. and Babauta wants to keep it that way and continue his healthy lifestyle.

"I am a happier person now and look and feel 20 years younger," said the 42-year-old Babauta.

'My story and yours'

Among the events he competed in the past two years, Babauta picked the Hell of Marianas, a 100-kilometer race around the island, as the toughest.

"I did the race solo. I trained hard every week and this event was so grueling, it tested my endurance. However, I paced my myself well and finished strong," said Babauta, who timed in at 5:01:12 in his debut, outracing six other Hell returnees.

A few weeks before the 100-km event, Babauta joined the pre-Hell 50-km bike race and posted a decent time. His first long distance run was the 10k event in the Saipan Festival of Runs in January last year and three months later, he debuted in Tagaman, doing the bike leg.

"I will do the bike and run legs this year and hopefully, next year I can do all three legs," Babauta said.

He also hopes more people will turn into sports and other healthy activities in the near future.

"Who would have thought I will be doing all these? Yes, everyone is different, but I hope my story will be your story one day," Babauta said.

PACQUIAO

From Page 28

tled after Mayweather outlined a drug testing plan Pacquiao wouldn't accept.

Had that fight come together, it would have been in Las Vegas. So as far as Cowboys owner Jerry Jones was concerned, things worked out just fine.

"It did," Jones said, smiling. "This gave us an opening. We were very aggressive. We were pretty quick to make a deal."

Pacquiao's promoter Bob Arum was smitten by the stadium during negotiations for a possible Pacquaio-Mayweather fight. Arum returned for a Cowboys playoff game, sitting near former President George W. Bush in Jones' box.

Arum has promoted fights at the Astrodome and at Yankee Stadium. He predicts Cowboys Stadium "will have a big role in boxing for years to come."

"I have never, ever seen anything like it," Arum said. "There is nothing in the world like this place. It just blows you away."

The stadium is hosting the NBA All-Star Game next month and will host the Super Bowl next year. It's also in the running as a World Cup site, should football's showcase come to the United States.

Money talks and Jones believes he can make it financially worthwhile for fighters. His goal is to host up to four or five fights a year, "once we establish that we are the place to fight and have the kind of stature that we want to have." He used Madison Square Garden as a comparison.

For this fight, the Cowboys are planning to sell around 40,000 seats, offering tickets on all but the highest decks.

Jones vowed that fight night will be even splashier than the news conference, where sparklers fired from the tips of the flagpoles, and Michael Buffer gave his signature introduction.

"We're going to make this one of the most interesting fights to view that there's ever been," he said. "It'll have everything to do with the flexibility of this board right above the ring. We're going to have some fun with it."

The fight itself should be pretty good, too.

Pacquiao (50-3-2, 38 KOs) is widely considered the best fighter, pound-for-pound, in the world. In November, he beat Miguel Cotto, who beat Clottey (35-3, 20 KOs) last summer. However, that fight was a split decision that many felt should've gone to Clottey, a Ghanaian who lives in New York.

The boxers praised each other on Tuesday, and also were gushing over the facility and the glitzy news conference.

"I like the introduction," Pacquiao said. "I'm surprised. I feel like I'm a ... football player!"

Soon enough, he looked like one.

Jones presented Pacquiao with a No. 3 jersey featuring his name on the back. Clottey received a No. 13 jersey.

The significance? It's shorthand for the date of the bout: 3-13.

TRENCH

From Page 28

countries have started arriving to Haiti to give assistance and since Trench Tech and the CNMI people do not have the means go to the affected areas, Alvarez hopes this simple fundraising will still help those in need.

"Trench Tech is calling on all MMA fans to come out and help our brothers and sisters in Haiti. By watching Fearless, you not only get a chance to enjoy action in the octagon cage, you also extend a helping hand to people in dire need," Alvarez said in a telephone interview with *Saipan Tribune* yesterday.

The Rites of Passage 8: Fearless will be the first fight that Trench Tech is hosting this year and it will be held on Feb. 12 at the Royal Taga Hall of the Saipan World Resort.

The event is a proving ground for young up-and-coming talented fighters who want to take their fighting skills to the next level of MMA competition. However, next month's show in the octagon will not only feature debuting combatants, but also seasoned fighters from both Saipan and Korea.

Korean Top Team's Hyun Gyu Lim, "Dr. Kang" Bung Chan Kang, and Young Nam Gu will be making their debut in CNMI MMA via ROP 8 and will be featured in the night's triple main event, battling Saipan bets.

Lim will be dueling veteran Slade "The Rage" Adelbai with the former hoping to improve his 5-3-1 win-loss-draw record. Fasi "Quikdraw" Jesse will be facing Kang in a 155-lb. event, while Chris "No Love" Laayug will be squaring off against Gu in a 145-lb. bout.

Meanwhile, Trench Tech is still looking for fighters wanting to see action in the season-kicking event. Trench Tech added tickets for Fearless will be available starting next week at the following stores: Boarderline, 670 Rocksteady Shop, Hannam Super Market, Mobil Kagman, and Trench Tech gym in San Antonio. Ticket prizes are $20 for general admission and $30 for VIP.

For more information, contact Alvarez at 483-4MMA.

TRIBUNE SPORTS SCORES

NBA STANDINGS

EASTERN CONFERENCE

Atlantic Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
Boston	27	12	.692	—
Toronto	21	21	.500	7 1/2
New York	17	24	.415	11
Philadelphia	13	27	.325	14 1/2
New Jersey	3	37	.075	24 1/2

Southeast Division

Atlanta	26	14	.650	—
Orlando	26	15	.634	1/2
Miami	21	19	.525	5
Charlotte	20	19	.513	5 1/2
Washington	14	26	.350	12

Central Division

Cleveland	32	11	.744	—
Chicago	18	21	.462	12
Milwaukee	16	23	.410	14
Detroit	14	26	.350	16 1/2
Indiana	14	27	.341	17

WESTERN CONFERENCE

Southwest Division

Dallas	27	14	.659	—
San Antonio	25	15	.625	1 1/2
Houston	23	18	.561	4
Memphis	22	18	.550	4 1/2
New Orleans	21	19	.525	5 1/2

Northwest Division

Denver	26	14	.650	—
Portland	25	17	.595	2
Oklahoma City	23	18	.561	3 1/2
Utah	23	18	.561	3 1/2
Minnesota	9	33	.214	18

Pacific Division

L.A. Lakers	32	9	.780	—
Phoenix	24	18	.571	8 1/2
L.A. Clippers	18	22	.450	13 1/2
Sacramento	15	25	.375	16 1/2
Golden State	12	27	.308	19

Yesterday's Games

Cleveland 108, Toronto 100
Miami 113, Indiana 83

BY THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

2009 SBA Annual Awards Banquet

PHOTOS By
ROSELYN B. MONROYO

The Top 3 placers in the 2009 Budweiser King and Queen of the Lanes and Fiji Water Prince/Princess of the Lanes final roll-offs pose for a group photo during the 200 Saipan Bowling Association Annual Awards Banquet on Monday at Shirley's Coffee Shop in Susupe.

King of the Lanes Percy Omechelang, center, is joined by Richard Leong, and Alex Castro in the podium during the trophy presentation.

Queen of the Lanes Ron Cal is flanked by runners-up Diana Chong, left, and Carol McKenzie.

Prince of the Lanes Raphael Zapanta shows the trophy and a box of Fiji Water he won after ruling the season-ending tournament early this month.

Ben Aizon is given a special award for his continued participation in the club's tournaments.

King of the Lanes fifth placer Russell Zapanta, left, is congratulated by SBA president Jerry Tan.

Raymond Zapanta, right, is all smiles as he receives his prize from SBA president Jerry Tan for getting the most ranking points in the men's division.

Yho Villavicencio, center, and Diane Camacho tied for fifth place in the women's roll-off and are shown with SBA president Jerry Tan.

Fourth place Gigi Zapanta gets a Budweiser hat and $100 during the awards ceremony.

2008 King of the Lanes Raymond Angeles, right, settled for a fourth place finish.

Rosario draws first blood in SGA

2009 SGA Ace of Ace champion Vince Deleon Guerrero Rosario is assured of a chance to defend his title this year after ruling the Saipan Golfers Association's January Ace tournament on Sunday at Coral Ocean Point.

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Saipan Tribune
Sports

LeBron just misses triple-double as Cavs down Raps

Shaquille O'Neal had one regret about moving into elite NBA scoring air. It should have happened long ago.

24

Noni Saipan completes semis cast

Noni Saipan's Ivan De Vero floats for a shot against Diamond defenders during their playoff game in the UBA caging on Tuesday at the Garapan Basketball Court.

ROSELYN B. MONROYO

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

The cold, breezy night was supposed to have a cooling effect on players, but instead a heated playoff match erupted in 2009 UBA/Miller Lite Men's Basketball League with Noni Saipan escaping with a 74-73 overtime win over Diamond Fixers on Tuesday at the Garapan Basketball Court.

Banjo Basila canned a free throw in the last seven seconds of the extension period to move Noni to the semifinals against Ol'Aces. Basila's split charities came after Noni went 1-for-16 from the foul line since the last two minutes in regulation.

Both teams struggled from the free throw area due to the heavy winds blowing that night. There were several occasions when players from both camps missed badly from the foul line, with the ball hitting nothing

See NONI on Page 26

Pacquiao, Clottey to rumble at hi-tech Cowboys Stadium

AP

Boxers Manny Pacquiao, left, of the Philippines, and Joshua Clottey, of Ghana, right, pose with the Dallas Cowboy Cheerleaders during a news conference announcing their fight at Cowboys Stadium in Arlington, Texas, on Tuesday, Jan. 19, 2010. P

JAIME ARON
AP SPORTS WRITER

BOXING

ARLINGTON, Texas (AP)—Standing under the world's largest high-definition television and surrounded by Dallas Cowboys cheerleaders, Manny Pacquiao and Joshua Clottey were all smiles for the announcement of their welterweight fight on Tuesday.

The March 13 bout will be the first boxing match at the $1.2 billion Cowboys Stadium.

"This is going to be the Super Bowl of boxing," said Freddie Roach, Pacquiao's trainer.

Not really. That would've been the hoped-for matchup between Pacquiao and Floyd Mayweather Jr., which was scut-

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Trench Tech joins Haiti relief drive

ROSELYN B. MONROYO

Giovanni "Palaxi" Sablan connects on a kick against against Guam's Wyneu "1 Time" Bamba during Trench Tech's Trench Wars 11: Redemption held last month at the Royal Taga Hall of Saipan World Resort. Trench Tech will kick of the 2010 season on Feb. 12 via ROP 8: Fearless.

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

Trench Tech, Inc. has joined the growing list of individuals/groups from around the world that will be sending help to the earthquake-ravaged Haiti.

Trench Tech, Inc. president and promoter Cuki Alvarez said they will be donating $1 to a relief fund for Haiti from every ticket sold in the Rites of Passage 8: Fearless. Alvarez added they have yet to decide in which organization will they course through the donation, but Trench Tech may opt for the American Red Cross, CNMI Chapter due to easy access.

A magnitude 7.0-quake hit Haiti on Jan. 12, damaging properties, killing tens of thousands, and leaving nearly two million homeless. Cause-oriented groups from various

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Babauta is 'Big Ben' no more

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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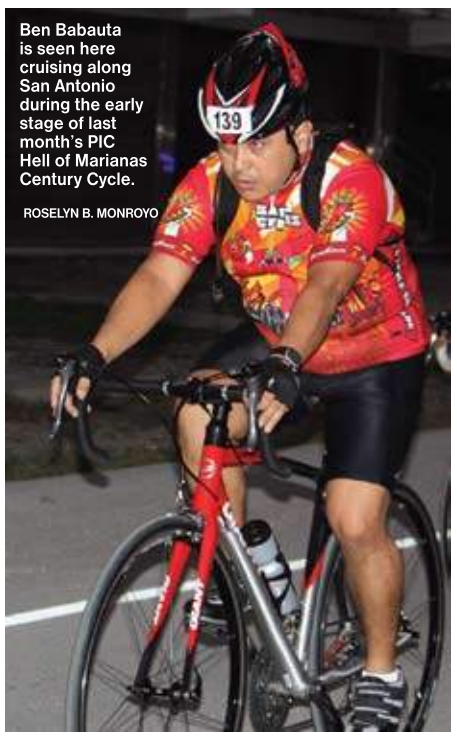
REPORTER

SPORTS FLIGHT

Vicente "Ben" Babauta making headlines in community and business pages of newspapers is old news. Babauta competing in various sports events? That's now the story.

From organizer/supporter of both community and sports events, Babauta turned himself into a competitor, joining running and biking events on Saipan beginning last year.

Babauta is the organizer of the Tourna-



Ben Babauta is seen here cruising along San Antonio during the early stage of last month's PIC Hell of Marianas Century Cycle.

ROSELYN B. MONROYO

Name:	Vicente "Ben" Babauta
Age:	42
Sports:	Biking and Running
Occupation:	DFS Assistant General Manager-Operation

ment of Champions golf tournament and other sports/community activities, recipient of the 2009 Chamber of Commerce Businessperson of the Year, and president of Northern Marianas College Foundation since 2007

He can add athlete to his resume, as he had participated in the Hell of Marianas Century Cycle Race, Saipan Festival of Runs, Banzai Cliff Fun Run, Jazy Cup Bike Race, Tagaman Triathlon, Christmas Island Relay, and a few more running and bike competitions.

'Wellness-holic'

As an athlete, Babauta gives himself a six (10 as highest, one as lowest) as far as being competitive is concerned. However, he became a competitor in sports event not for the sake of winning, but for wellness.

"Wellness was my main reason. However I found out that it is a lot of fun, experiencing being out there with all level of athletes, doing these events, and finishing strong for myself," Babauta said.

Babauta's love affair with sports

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